

# THE IVOR GURNEY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 56

October 2014



Ivor Gurney, the soldier (R K R Thornton)

## Society Matters

**New Officers** The Committee has formally appointed Philip Richardson as Secretary and Colin Brookes as Treasurer of the Ivor Gurney Society. Colin will deal with membership matters. See the last page of the Newsletter for the contact details for both Philip and Colin.

**Gurney Window** For those members who were unable to attend the Society AGM in May, your attention is drawn to the 12 page booklet compiled by Richard Cann about the Gurney window in Gloucester Cathedral, dedicated last April. The booklet explains the Gurney influences which inspired the designer, Tom Denny, and contains full colour images of the window. To order a copy you can send either a cheque for £3, or a stamped A5 envelope and £2.50 to Richard Cann, 54 Hinton Road, Gloucester GL1 3JS.

**Email Contact** The letter sent to all members by Chairman, Rolf Jordan, in June – requesting members' email addresses and views on receiving the Newsletter by email - received a mixed response. Many thanks to those members who did respond. However, many have still not replied and we ask again that those members who are on-line **to let us have your email address** – this applies particularly to our American and Canadian members. The Committee has no plans at present to send out the Newsletter by email. Please send your details to Colin's email address on the last page of the Newsletter.

**Poems of War** Finally, the Committee has approved the publication of *Poems of War*, a selection by Kelsey Thornton of Gurney's poems relating to WWI. It is intended for sale at the Imperial War Museum and In Flanders Museum, as well as to Society members and should be available by Armistice Day 2014.

The cover price for individual copies is £5. Bulk copies to organisations such as museums or armed services groups will attract a discount. Any member who wants an individual copy, or may be able to take multiple copies for a local organisation on a sale-or-return basis, should contact Kelsey Thornton at:

2 Rectory Terrace, Gosforth, Newcastle-on-Tyne, NE3 1XY

[rkthornton@btinternet.com](mailto:rkthornton@btinternet.com)

## Chair's Report May 2014 (Chair: Rolf Jordan)

Our 2013 Spring Event was held at St Andrew's, Churchdown on 11 May. We heard a poetry reading by Professor Philip Gross, talking about the depiction of the River Severn in his own poetry and that of Ivor Gurney. After that we had a lively talk by Jeremy Dibble on Hubert Parry followed by a recital by Jonathan Musgrave, an outstanding pianist from the RCM. The event, happily, made a tiny profit. On Sunday, Eleanor Rawling led a poetry walk (the Severn and the Saltbox) around the Maisemore and riverside area, revisiting Gurney's maternal grandmother's home. The rain rarely disturbs our walks too much, but by the end, it beat us.

In the last twelve months we have had volume 19 of the *Ivor Gurney Society Journal*, which is possibly the penultimate one under the editorship of Kelsey Thornton, and two newsletters from Eleanor Rawling. I would like to express gratitude to them on behalf of the entire membership, as I know that members deeply appreciate receiving our publications, which remain valuable long after their first appearance.

At present we have 189 paying members in the UK, and 21 overseas. Our membership list has consistently risen and fallen around the 200 mark: for example, the usual losses of the year were counteracted by the screening of Tim Kendall's film, which brought in a handful of new people. When Tim's hour-long film was shown on BBC4 in March, it was pleasingly listed as a *Radio Times* 'choice of the day'. It was directed and produced by Clive Flowers of the film company, Other Roads, who has been a familiar face from our own events. The BBC also announced Gurney as Radio 4 'Composer of the Week' during June. Following on from that (in the Summer) will be something that would have sounded like a practical joke a few years ago: the BBC has programmed an orchestral work by Ivor Gurney at the Proms. This is the *War Elegy*, sharing the programme with Sally Beamish and William Walton on 1 August.

Last August (2013), Sarah Connolly arranged an 'Ivor Gurney Memorial Festival' at Gloucester Cathedral in order to raise funds for a new window commemorating Gurney in the Lady Chapel. This of course was not a Society initiative, but Sarah's own, and we are glad to report that she has agreed to be

a new Patron of the Society. The window, designed by Tom Denny, was officially dedicated after Evensong on Wednesday 30 April. What greater tribute can Gurney have been given than a window in his own beloved Cathedral, an orchestral work at the Proms and 'Composer of the Week' – all within a few months?

With all this positive interest in Ivor Gurney to report, we must consider the position and future of the Society itself. In the above projects, we have only been asked to supply contacts and give light support, having never initiated any of them. Having said that, it should be noted that our website has proved to be very useful in publicising these things. According to 'webmaster' Philip Lancaster, the website has received 25,000 visitors to date, and we have a hand-in-glove Facebook page which has many 'followers', ensuring that both are the Society's 'public face'.

While our webpages, publications and events do attract attention and interest, I do have to be clear and say that at the present time it is impossible to say how long we can actually go on as an organisation. There are some absolutely crucial roles to fill and the committee needs help from its membership. Firstly, we need help with the website, as Philip simply does not have time to update it. The more fundamental roles of Treasurer and Secretary are needed today: John Philips presently does both. He has now reached a position where he feels under an *obligation* to keep doing them, as a founding father of the Society. However, he has not been well during the last year, and indeed wanted to resign today. Requests through our newsletter have drawn a blank, so I would like to reiterate them I cannot stress how important these roles are. [It should be noted that, since this report was written, the posts of both Secretary and Treasurer have now been filled.]

This year saw the passing of Charlie Hooey of Winnipeg and Pat Evans of Churchdown. Pat left us a bequest of £500, and we are very grateful and honoured to receive such a gift. The committee has yet to discuss the best way to use it, but it would help us and the Trust in the projected publication of that fascinating Gurney motet 'Since I believe in God the Father Almighty', which has been attracting interest since its premiere performance in 2012.

The Trust has given me a list of several publications with Gurney inclusions: the Imperial War Museum's *First World War Poems from the Front* edited by Paul O' Prey appears in June; *Some Desperate Glory* subtitled 'The First World War the poets knew' by Sassoon's most recent biographer Max Egremont is published this month. An unusual book is *World War I Love Stories* by Gill Paul. One story focuses on Gurney's romance with his nurse, Annie Drummond.

Recordings of songs are less in evidence, but the latest *BBC Music Magazine* will be a mandatory purchase for all Gurney enthusiasts. This month's cover CD features the premier recording of *A Gloucestershire Rhapsody* with David Parry and the BBC Scottish, and a corrected version of the *War Elegy* under David Lloyd-Jones, which you will remember was issued on Dutton records with an unfortunate glitch. The disc also comes with Frank Bridge's *Oration*, a fine piece well worth having. It is on sale in two weeks, on 14 May. The Society supported the EM Records 'Works for Violin & Piano' release last year, Gurney's name being the selling point. Rupert Marshall-Luck and Matthew Rickard played the premier recording of the Sonata in E-flat major alongside pieces by Sainsbury and Elgar.

Surprising to say, but as I write, the actual centenary of the Great War is not yet upon us. We must be careful to build upon the extraordinary exposure this anniversary has afforded both Gurney and the Society, and not let complacency creep in.

*Rolf Jordan, 3 May 2014*

From Rolf Jordan, Oct 2014: The next recording by EM records will feature two hugely significant **world premiere Sonata recordings - those of Ivor Gurney's Cello Sonata in E minor and Cyril Scott's Cello Sonata no.1**. These will be complemented by further world premiere recordings of works by Ian Venables: *Elegy*, *Poem*, *The Moon Sails Out*, *It Rains*, and *At Malvern*. The recording is scheduled for the end of November at Birmingham University; Richard Jenkinson and Benjamin Frith will be the performers, and the engineer and producer will be Richard Bland. The Ivor Gurney Society has donated £200 to this recording (alongside an anonymous donation), but a further £2,750 is still needed. Any cheques for support can be given to our own Treasurer Colin, made payable to "EMF Endeavours" - or sent to E. Marshall-Luck at The Red House, Lanchards Lane, Shillingstone, Blandford Forum, DT11 0QU. These will of course be acknowledged in the CD book.

## Summary of income & expenditure for 2013 – 2014

Bank balance brought forward on 1 April 2013 **1957.46**

### **INCOME**

Subscriptions & donations	2558.71
Sales of Notecards & Society merchandise	489.02
Society Gurney Day – May 2013	470.00
May 2014	445.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>3962.73</b>

### **EXPENDITURE**

Society Journal – printing	1092.00
postage (2012)	315.00
postage (2013)	348.59
Sub-total	1755.59
Newsletters (2) - printing	239.00
postage	341.49
Sub-total	580.49
Purchase of merchandise	136.18
General administration expenses	19.49
Subscription	40.00
Transfer members' subs to Glos. Cathedral	230.00
2013 Gurney Day – fees/expenses	854.25
2014 Gurney Day - advance payment	50.00
Sub-total	1329.92
<b>Total</b>	<b>3666.00</b>

Bank balance, 31 March 2014, carried forward to 2014/15 **£2254.19**

*John Phillips (Treasurer), April 2014*

## Poems of War by Ivor Gurney

This new publication, edited by Kelsey Thornton, will shortly be available.

In the *Preface*, Thornton writes:

Noel Hayward, grandson of Ivor Gurney's sister Dorothy, is the 'onlie begetter' of this volume. On the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War he went to the In Flanders Fields Museum in Ieper (the city they used to call Ypres) and found that, although one of Gurney's poems has a prominent place at the front of the exhibition, there was no small book in the shop which visitors, with little space in their luggage, could carry away to follow up an interest in Gurney's life and work. He also suggested that the royalties on Gurney's work could be used to help fund its publication. This is the result of his vision.

From the poems:

### *War Books*

What did they expect of our toil and extreme  
Hunger – the perfect drawing of a heart's dream?  
Did they look for a book of wrought art's perfection,  
Who promised no reading, nor praise, nor publication?  
Out of the heart's sickness the spirit wrote  
For delight, or to escape hunger, or of war's worst anger,  
When the guns died to silence and men would gather sense  
Somehow together, and find this was life indeed,  
And praise another's nobleness, or to Cotswold get hence;  
There we wrote – Corbie Ridge – or in Gonnehem at rest -  
Or Fauquissart – our world's death songs, ever the best.  
One made sorrows' praise passing the church where silence  
Opened for the long quivering strokes of the bell –  
Another wrote all soldiers' praise, and of France and night's stars,  
Served his guns, got immortality, and died well.  
But Ypres played another trick with its danger on me,  
Kept still the needing and loving-of-action body,  
Gave no candles, and nearly killed me twice as well,  
And no souvenirs, though I risked my life in the stuck tanks.  
Yet there was praise of Ypres, love came sweet in hospital,  
And old Flanders went under to long ages of plays' thought in my pages.

## **‘God I must go to Framilode’**

### **Ivor Gurney Society walk at Framilode, Sunday 4 May 2014**

After the overcast and rainy walk around Maisemore last year, it was a delight to wake on the 4 May and see that thin mist and high cloud showed there would be a fine day ahead. This promise of dry socks meant our poetry walk was attended by one of the largest crowds I can remember – twenty-four people (one of whom had cycled up from Bristol!) and two dogs. Plenty of the two-legged walkers had been to Churchdown the day before, but it was a pleasure to meet many new faces, including our guide (and now new member of the Gurney Society Committee) Phil Richardson.



His route took us alongside the Severn at Framilode, then upward to a viewpoint at Barrow Hill and through Barrow Copse (where Gurney had heard nightingales) to Framilode again – about three miles in all. Gloucestershire looked more effervescently picturesque than normal, and seemed almost overloaded with flower and blossom. Foamy hawthorn, banks of dandelion clocks, and a buttercup field that ‘blessed our boots with gold’ were memorable, though the lagging young-leafed trees that still showed great clumps of mistletoe (which never occurs in my native county) were also



enjoyable company. The views took in May Hill, of course, the cliffs at Newnham, and distantly, the Severn Bridge.

A nice touch of Phil's was to give out a sheet of images showing 'old' Framilode. This showed clearly how the drowsy lane and canal of today (with its Lock Keeper's cottage) has changed since Gurney knew them.

It is, if anything, more rural now than then, but a pretty hamlet rather than picturesque working place. The road over the old lock already looks ancient. This is the kind of spot where one finds indomitable brick plinths and concretions of iron from forgotten Works in the verges. It must be quite bleak in the winter. Phil was able to point out old tea gardens and places where ferries once crossed, and those places where Gurney launched his little boat, but of course barely a stick floats down the Severn now. Could that be a wrecked spar poking up through the mud and reeds? No, but this is a good place to imagine such things. The walk ended with a look at St Peter's Church, ancient-feeling and newly refurbished. The Pockett family, whose tenancies of Lock House flanked that of Gurney's tidesman and carpenter friend James Harris, fill the churchyard – relatives of our guide, as it happens.

***Rolf Jordan***



## The Lock-Keeper

Of the many people who influenced Ivor Gurney a good deal is known. But there is one exception, someone whose character and knowledge had a profound effect on Gurney. This was James Harris the Lock-Keeper at Framilode. As lock-keeper Harris occupied Lock House and controlled the passage of boats between the Severn and the Stroudwater Canal. Lock House also served as Framilode Post Office well into the twentieth century.

The growing woollen industries around Stroud on the edge of the Cotswolds relied initially on water power from the River Frome (also known as Stroudwater) to run the mills. However, as demands grew, water power was not sufficient and coal was brought in from the Midlands via the Severn as far as Gloucester or Framilode from where it was carried in horse-drawn wagons up to the mills. Eventually a canal was constructed more or less following the path of the River Frome from Framilode to Stroud. It was opened in 1779 and was thus one of the first canals in Britain. Lock House at Framilode had been occupied since the latter end of 1776.

James Harris was very much a local man. He was born at Saul in 1860 the son of Joseph Harris, born in 1826 also at Saul and his wife Ann, born in 1829 just a few miles away at Cam. They had married around 1851. At the Census of 1851 Joseph was living with a family of Harrises in Gloucester and was employed as a "Ship Carpenter". The head of the household, one John Harris, was a "Canal Lock Attendant" presumably at the end of the Gloucester and Berkeley Canal which had opened in 1827.

James had older siblings: William (b. 1852), Emily (b. 1853), Walter (b. 1855), and Henry (b. 1857) and four more children appeared after him: Tom (b. 1862), Charles (b. 1865), Lucy (b. 1869), and Elizabeth (b. 1870). According to the 1871 Census the family was living at The Denhalls, Saul. By 1881 the family address had become Canal Bank, Saul and Joseph and Tom are listed as "General Carpenters" whereas James and Charles are "Ship Carpenters". In 1891 Joseph, James and Charles are listed as carpenters. In 1892 James married Helena Elizabeth Daw (born in 1862 at Frampton).

The 1901 Census suggests that James and Helena had moved from Saul to Frampton but he was still a 'carpenter (ships)'. In 1905 Helena Harris died and in 1907 her mother-in-law Anne Harris passed away aged 78.

In 1901 Ellen Beard was living at The Ship Inn, Framilode just a few yards from Lock House with her uncle and aunt Frederick and Sarah Ann Poyner and working as a bar lady. Ellen had lived with the Poyners for some years, the 1871 Census showing she was living with them near Newent. Early in 1911 James Harris married Ellen (Nellie) Beard (b. 1862 at Framilode) and by the time the 1911 Census came around James and Nellie were living at Framilode Post Office (i.e. Lock House) and James is listed as a Tidesman for the Stroud Water Canal Company having taken up the appointment in the same year.

We do not know when Ivor Gurney first visited Framilode. It is possible that he went there with his parents as a weekend treat since Framilode was a popular destination for people from Gloucester. They could travel down on the Gloucester Berkeley canal on one of two steamers the *Lapwing* or the *Wave*, providing a regular service between Gloucester and Sharpness. Passengers could alight at Stroud Junction and walk the short distance along the Stroudwater canal to Framilode. Here there were the Ship Inn, tea rooms and a ferry (hence Framilode Passage) from outside The Darrell Arms across to the Blue Boys Inn at Rodley. Rowing and sailing were popular despite the potential risks on the tidal river.

Ivor Gurney had stayed with James Harris at Framilode around 1907 and learnt to sail there. He bought the *Dorothy* around this time as well, possibly with Harris's advice. He must have visited frequently during the next few years sailing with F W Harvey up and down the stretch of the Severn around Framilode. It is significant that in May 1913, after his breakdown, Ivor chose to convalesce at Framilode rather than at home in Gloucester. Whether Gurney made any visits to Framilode during the war years is not clear.

James Harris, the Lock-Keeper, passed away in 1918.

***Phil Richardson***

## A Poet in East London

In this year when journalists are commemorating the First World War, we will hear a lot about poets who served and wrote about their experiences, among them Ivor Gurney. Gurney is known to many people because he was a musician as well as a poet. To others he is predominantly a poet of Gloucestershire; not many people will associate his name with London, still less with east London. But after his discharge from the army in 1918, he wandered London streets, and wrote about them.

Ivor Gurney's experiences in the trenches had scarred a sensitive mind. He tried to continue his studies at the Royal College of Music under Ralph Vaughan Williams, but was unable to settle. Always of a restless disposition and a hardened walker, he often roamed London after dark. He observed city scenes with the same interest as he looked at landscape; the people he looked at with compassion, and wrote affectionately of them much as he did of his comrades at the Front.

In his post-war collection, *80 Poems or So*, he included the poem 'North Woolwich'. While he was walking by 'tall derricks / And floating chimney-pots with empty tackle', he has in mind the classical gods and goddesses so often invoked by writers of pastoral verse. He concluded that people living and working in West Ham had more need of a Christian god, and drew a warm picture of a very human Jesus, as a fellow worker:

Can Aphrodite bless so evil dwelling.

Or Mercury have heed of Canning Town?

Nay, rather, for that ugly, that evil smelling

Township, one Christ from Heaven should come down,

Pitiful and comradely, with tender signs,

And hot the tea, and shield a chap from fines,

A foreman carpenter not yet full grown.



**Woolwich Free Ferry 1906-09 ([www.portcities.org.uk](http://www.portcities.org.uk))**

In 'A Wish', Gurney has a vision of turning West Ham into something of a Garden Suburb, to give the children a better chance in life. It begins:

I would hope for the children of West Ham  
Wooden-frame houses square, with some sort of stuff  
Crammed in to keep the wind away that's rough,  
And rain; in summer cool, in cold comfortable enough.

Although it may seem rather quaint to think of West Ham being prettified, with children digging little plots of land, he did not envisage a constricted environment. He thought it better for things to be a little random and untidy. Better that, he wrote,

than the too exact  
Straight streets of modern times, that strait and strict  
And formal keep man's spirit within bounds,  
Where too dull duties keep in monotonous rounds.

In his night-time wanderings, Gurney loved to see the lights on the Thames. 'Woolwich or So' describes them: 'and the river's full/of gliding, shifting, radiant shivers, beautiful/of coloured lights and darks quicker than thought'. Day dawns, and he watches different classes of people starting their day. 'Fine rain' describes the gentlemen in bowlers and the aristocratic ladies, but his sympathy is with the 'old fellow by the orange barrow', who has seen so many wet mornings 'from far West Hammersmith to Bethnal Green' he merely gives a sniff 'as if/London held nothing worthy of that sniff.'

In 'The road', he writes of all the racial and national types 'out beyond Aldgate', living 'a hard life, hardly earned'. He sees them crammed on trams and buses

Or Saturday night dammed-  
Up, seething, dodging,  
Grumbling, laughing, over-busy  
Crowd in Mile End crammed,

The lines are short, quick and nervous, jostling like the crowd. The poem rushes through brief pictures of life in East London, bringing in football, music hall, and even the winkle-stalls: 'Or eating of strange fish/Or shelled things from barrows;/Stewed eels, winkles'.

After a few years of wandering back and forth between London where he was supposed to be studying, and his beloved Gloucestershire, poor Ivor could no longer cope with life, and spent the rest of it in asylums, still writing frantically and composing music, some of which is only now beginning to be valued as work which is not merely incoherent rambling but pushes the boundaries of art. When Ivor Gurney was withdrawn from the world, it was not only rural England, but the East End, which lost a poet.

Poems taken from *80 Poems or So*, edited by George Walter and R K R Thornton Press, 1997, and *Collected Poems of Ivor Gurney* edited by P J Kavanagh, Oxford University Press, 1982. This article was originally printed in the East London History Society Newsletter, 2014.

**Pat Francis**

## Gurney Society Notecards, featuring Gloucestershire scenes.

**Still available: Ivor Gurney Society Notecards** featuring Gloucestershire scenes. 8 different cards designed and produced by Eleanor Rawling. Each card is 4" x 6" and presents a high quality colour photograph of a landscape with special meaning for Ivor Gurney and a poetry extract. Blank space for your own message. Envelopes provided. See example photos - (tho' actual cards are colour) and extracts below. **To buy now**, contact Eleanor Rawling, specify which packs you want (Cotswold or Severn valley) and send a cheque made out to The Ivor Gurney Society for the correct amount to 8 Mill Paddock, Abingdon, OX14 5EU. [EleRawling@aol.com](mailto:EleRawling@aol.com)  
**Website purchase available shortly** <http://ivorgurney.org.uk/shop.htm>

One pack of 4 cards showing Cotswold Edge scenes £6.00 inc. p&p;

One pack of 4 cards showing Severn Valley scenes £6.00 incl. p&p

Two packs cost £12.00 (incl. p&p)



War need not cut down trees, three  
hundred miles over Seas  
Children of those the Romans saw –  
lovely trunk and great-sail trees.

(‘Possessions’ by Ivor Gurney)



Who says ‘Gloucester’ sees a tall  
Fair fashioned shape of stone arise,  
That changes with the changing skies  
From Joy to gloom funereal,  
Then quick again to joy;

(‘The Old City’ by Ivor Gurney)

## Forthcoming Events

### **Autumn in Malvern Festival, Malvern Theatres Cinema**

Sunday 26th October 2pm Grange Road, Great Malvern, WR14 3HB

*Commemoration v Behind the Lines: A World War One Anthology*, featuring Gabriel Woolf and Linda Hart and revealing what they thought at home and what they knew at the front. Readings from poetry and prose written by men and women, young and old, combatants and observers Ticket £10 unreserved. [www.malvernfestival.co.uk](http://www.malvernfestival.co.uk)

### **Yesterday Lost, 5 November**

*Yesterday Lost* is a collection of Gurney's songs, poems and letters to honour the memory of Ivor Gurney and the generation of World War 1. It was presented at Cheltenham College on 12 September and will be repeated with soprano Naomi Johnston, baritone David McKee and pianist/reader Jonathan Carne in Truro Cathedral on November 5<sup>th</sup>, 7.00 pm. *Yesterday Lost* comprises three sections which correspond to the three phases of Gurney's life: Gloucester and early influences, World War 1, the aftermath. It will be part of a week of events entitled *Cornwall Remembers* and it will culminate with two performances of Britten's War Requiem. Tickets £10 from Hall for Cornwall, 01872 262466 or on the door.

**Lest We Forget** is a concert to be given by the Philomusica of Gloucester in Tewkesbury Abbey on 9th November at 7.30pm. The concert will include Four Orchestral Songs by Ivor Gurney. *By a Bierside* and *In Flanders* - orchestrated by Herbert Howells and *Severn Meadows* and *Even Such is Time* orchestrated by Ian Venables. Tickets, can be bought on the door or in advance: Tel 01452 506417 or email: [tickets@philomusica.org.uk](mailto:tickets@philomusica.org.uk)

### **From F W Harvey Society website; 10 November 2014**

**F W Harvey: Poems and Comrades** by Roger Deeks at 7pm at Nailsworth Local History Society, Mortimer Room, Nailsworth. Information at [www.nailsworthsociety.co.uk](http://www.nailsworthsociety.co.uk)

**Film: Severn and Somme**, about Ivor Gurney, will be shown at The Chapter House Gloucester Cathedral on Saturday 23 January 2016, 7-30pm. Tickets will be available from the cathedral nearer the time.



The event includes concert and film with a bar. For tickets, email [antheapage@hotmail.com](mailto:antheapage@hotmail.com)

**'Poems on the Underground'**. This scheme was launched in 1986 following an idea from American writer, Judith Chernaik, to get poetry to a wider audience. Poems, selected by Judith Chernaik and poets Cicely Herbert and Gerard Benson, are displayed on posters in 3,000 advertising spaces in train carriages across London, and are usually changed three times a year. A new poster will feature Gurney's poem 'Bach and the Sentry'. Look out for it! [www.tfl.gov.uk/corporate/about-tfl/culture-and-heritage/music-film-and-poetry/poems-on-the-underground](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/corporate/about-tfl/culture-and-heritage/music-film-and-poetry/poems-on-the-underground)

**Ivor Gurney Remembered**, a project, written in Gurney's memory by Val Doulton of the Live Literature Company, will be performed at various locations over the period 2014 – 2018. As well as commemorating WW1, this remembers those suffering Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, past and present. For further details see [www.theliveliteraturecompany.co.uk](http://www.theliveliteraturecompany.co.uk)

### **The Dymock Poets, Spring Event 2015 Saturday 21st March**

A walk followed by a talk Meet at Bromsberrow Village Hall, Albright Lane, Bromsberrow, Ledbury HR8 1RZ. Full details will be published nearer the time. <http://www.dymockpoets.org.uk>

### **Gloucester Music Society, Saturday 18 April 2015**

**Two Concerts** - *with tea and a talk by Ian Venables*

**Concert 1 - 3.00pm** Howells - Rhapsodic Quintet; Boodle - Piano Quartet - World Première; Bliss - Clarinet Quintet; Rubbra - Piano Trio in One Movement, Op 68

**Concert 2 - 7.30pm** Ireland - Piano Trio no 2 in E minor; Bridge - Piano Quintet, H49a; Venables - Clarinet Quintet; Howells - Piano Quartet in A minor, Op 21

St Mary de Lode Church, Archdeacon Street, Gloucester GL1 2QT. Tickets for each concert are £17, concessions £16, student £5, tea £5 and can be booked on the website, by ringing 01242 620736 or on the door. <http://www.gloucestermusicsociety.org.uk/>

### **Alliance of Literary Societies, 30/31 May 2015**

The 2015 weekend of the Alliance of Literary Societies is being hosted by the Trollope Society in York, 30/31 May. For more information see <http://www.allianceofliterarysocieties.org.uk>

### **The Three Choirs Festival 2014, Hereford**

For nearly three hundred years the cathedral cities of Hereford, Gloucester and Worcester have taken it in turn to host an annual 'music meeting'. The original performers were the three cathedral choirs, who remain at the heart of the festival, but the large-scale choral repertoire at today's concerts is performed by the TCF Chorus drawn from the three cities, joined by an array of international artists and ensembles to provide a diversity unimagined in the eighteenth century. In 2015, the festival celebrates its 300th anniversary. [www.3choirs.org](http://www.3choirs.org)

**Gurney in Palma de Mallorca;** Society member, David Macfarlane draws attention to a report in the Times Literary Supplement, August 2014 which described a performance of Gurney's songs taking place as part of the Robert Graves Society Conference in Palma de Mallorca. Some of the events were near Graves house at Deia where "a concert included settings of Graves by Ivor Gurney. The work was beautifully sung and played as the evening deepened and the amphitheatre of the mountains paled.."



**Poetry By Heart** is a pioneering national competition....

....designed to encourage pupils aged 14-18 and at school and college in England to learn and to recite poems by heart. Not in an arm-waving, props-supported thespian extravaganza, but as the outward and audible manifestation of an inwardly-understood and enjoyed poem. Poetry By Heart successfully engages young people from diverse social backgrounds and all types of school in personal discovery of the pleasures of poetry. Each pupil is challenged to memorise and recite two poems – one published before 1914 and one in or after 1914. Pupils choose these from the timeline anthology of over 600 years of poetry on this website. In 2015, at county level and beyond, contestants will recite a third poem from a special collection of World War 1 poems as part of the centenary commemorations. The competition is a pyramid of participation from individual classrooms to whole school/college contests, then county contests, regional semi-finals and the grand final, to be held at Homerton College, Cambridge, in March 2015. In the process, pupils foster deep personal connections with the poems chosen and bring poetry alive for their friends, families and communities. Ivor Gurney is one of the poets featured in the First World War anthology on the 'poetry by heart' website ([www.poetrybyheart.org.uk](http://www.poetrybyheart.org.uk)) There are three of Gurney's poems listed – *Strange Hells*, *To His Love* and *The Silent One*.

### **Strange hells (1917)**

There are strange hells within the minds war made  
Not so often, not so humiliating afraid  
As one would have expected – the racket and fear guns made.  
One hell the Gloucester soldiers they quite put out;  
Their first bombardment, when in combined black shout  
Of fury, guns aligned, they ducked low their heads  
And sang with diaphragms fixed beyond all dreads,  
That tin and stretched-wire tinkle, that blither of tune;  
"Après la guerre fini" till hell all had come down,  
Twelve-inch, six-inch, and eighteen pounders hammering hell's thunders.  
Where are they now on state-doles, or showing shop patterns  
Or walking town to town sore in borrowed tatterns  
Or begged. Some civic routine one never learns.  
The heart burns – but has to keep out of the face how heart burn

## **The Ivor Gurney Society**

[www.ivorgurney.org.uk](http://www.ivorgurney.org.uk)

The Ivor Gurney Trust ([www.ivorgurneytrust.com](http://www.ivorgurneytrust.com))

### ***Patrons of the Society:***

Group Captain Anthony Boden, Sir Andrew Motion,  
Ian Partridge CBE, Sarah Connolly CBE

**President:** P J Kavanagh **Vice-President:** Adrian Partington

### **Membership rates (UK) (*all rates per annum*):**

Individuals £14; Joint £18; Students £5; Retired £10 single; £12.50 joint;  
Institutional £12.50; International see website.

### **International membership:**

You can join the Society by contacting the Treasurer at the address below  
or online at [www.ivorgurney.org.uk](http://www.ivorgurney.org.uk) via PayPal.



### **The Ivor Gurney Society Journal**

As well as the biannual Society newsletter, the Gurney Society publishes an annual journal, known as 'The Gurnal' which contains scholarly articles on Gurney's work and related items, incl. book and CD reviews. This is sent to all Society members and is for sale to non-members (see website).

### ***Current officers:***

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