

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Tyne and Esk Writers Committee  
held on Wednesday 07 December 2011 in the Community Centre, Port Seton.**

**1. Present**

Brenda Thomson (Convener), Billy Graham (Haddington), Alison Hunter (East Lothian Libraries), Tom Murray (Creative Writing Fellow), Jasmine Reavely (North Berwick Poetry), Diana Stevens (Treasurer), Angie Townsend (Musselburgh), Philip Wark (Midlothian Libraries) and Colin Will (Website Master).

Apologies : Daren Coghill (Penicuik), Lorna Dickson (North Berwick Prose), Alan Gay (Publications Manager) and Graham Leake (Vice Convenor/Dalkeith).

In attendance : Graeme Bettison as minute secretary.

**2. Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 07 September 2011 were approved.

**3. Report by Convener**

Brenda confirmed that the 2011 Writer of the Year competition had been concluded successfully and that the number of entries submitted had slightly increased in comparison to that in 2010. No significant issues had arisen from the organisation of the event.

**4. Matters Arising from previous minutes**

None.

**5. Report by Treasurer**

Diana circulated a note detailing the balance in the bank account as at 05/11/2011 and reported that authorised cheques had still to be cleared with would reduce the balance £4,198.76 as stated.

The circulated note is given as appendix 1.

Diana confirmed that a full report detailing the financial position and accounts would be available by the next meeting.

Philip advised that future financial planning should be made on the basis of no further core funding granted by Midlothian Council. He confirmed that support in kind (such as meeting accommodation) would likely continue.

Alison advised that, while final decisions had yet to be made by East Lothian Council, it was likely that core funding would be given for the coming financial year.

Brenda advised that she and Tom had previously arranged to meet with Alison and Philip on 22nd December (mainly in relation to the Writer of the Year competition) and that matter of funding and how Library Services might best support Tyne and Esk Writers would also be discussed then.

It was agreed that Brenda would invite groups to submit any budget issues to her by 19 December to feed into the Councils' budget planning and decision processes. It was also agreed that forward budget planning would be a priority issue for the committee in the coming months.

## **6. Report by Creative Writing Fellow**

Tom circulated the notes detailing his activities since September 2011. He advised that the Young Writers workshops in September (co-tutored with Angie) had been very successful with the development of young writers groups being identified as a possible future objective. It was agreed to consider this in future planning.

The presence of T&EW at the Lennoxlove Book Festival was a significant first step which was also capable of development as the potential to raise profile at this and other like events was considerable. It was also agreed to consider this issue in future planning.

The Creative Writing Day on 12 November had also been generally well received by all concerned. It was agreed that the lessons learned from the day and the feedback from participants would be used to inform the planning and delivery of future events.

Tom also outlined his on-going development work with each of the writing groups, his feed back to individual writers and giving publicity through talks and radio interviews.

The notes and schedule of Tom's planned visits to groups between January and March 2012 are given at appendix 2.

## **7. Ratification of Constitution**

Brenda reported that the drafting of the Constitution had been completed and asked the committee to ratify the same. On the proposal to do so by Angie as seconded by Diane, the Committee unanimously agreed to adopt the constitution.

## **8. Report by Web Site Manager**

Colin reported on the development of the web-site and encouraged all groups to follow the examples of the Dunbar and Musselburgh groups in putting their detail on the site. Colin was still seeking to recruit at least another 2 members to the "updating" team.

Brenda agreed to circulate this request to group representatives.

## **9. Publications**

It was thought that a better system might be put into place re- publications, particularly with regard to book launches. Alan, Colin, Tom and Brenda will meet in January to discuss this.

Colin confirmed that systems were in place to facilitate the sale of members' publications on the web-site.

## **10. Reports from Group Representatives**

The general discussion highlighted the wide diversity of interests, participation and dynamics within and between the groups, with some facing growing membership while at least one other with very few active participants.

Philip reported on the membership updating exercise for the Midlothian Groups and Alison agreed to set the same process in motion for the East Lothian groups with regard to data protection issues in particular.

Brenda agreed to contact the Port Seton group with a view to encouraging a representative attendance at future Committee meetings.

## **11. The Way Forward**

Brenda reported on the issues raised following the WOTY awards ceremony, the Forum held on 12 November and subsequently which might influence the Committee's thinking when addressing the way ahead which will be required in light of the changes to core funding.

In particular, the use of the Brunton Hall as a venue should be reconsidered. Ideas such as holding a competition for emerging / unpublished writers might be considered.

In response to representations received on the criteria for the Poetry competition, the Committee agreed unanimously to maintain the "40 line" rule.

It was agreed to include the general issues regarding the WOTY competition and awards in a review of the way forward.

## **12. Annual General Meeting**

It was agreed that an AGM should be held on a Monday evening in March 2012 with the venue likely to be in the John Gray Centre.

## **13. Promotional Flyer**

It was agreed to go ahead with the production of 5,000 flyers at an estimated cost of £250 - £270.

## **14. Diary**

No issues raised.

## **15. Other Competent Business**

Brenda reported that the appropriate insurance cover had now been obtained.

## **16. Date and Place of next meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 14 March 2012 at 1.30pm in Loanhead Library.

**Appendices/-**

## Tyne &amp; Esk Writers - statement as at 7 November 2011

	£	£
Balance in bank as at 05/11/2011		5716.98
<b>Less uncleared cheques:</b>		
T. Murray	1,098.72	
Food Hamper, lunch, dinner for Workshop	369.50	
B Robertson Photography, WOTY	50.00	
Balance as at 07/12/11	1,518.22	4,198.76
November Workshop		
<b>Income:</b>		
Attendance Fees (cheques & cash)	431.50	
Publication Sales	<u>11.00</u>	
	442.50	
<b>Expenses:</b>		
Consumables	42.60	
Catering	<u>369.50</u>	
	412.10	
Income over Expenditure		30.40

Appendix 2/-

**TYNE AND ESK COMMITTEE MEETING**

**07/12/11**

Tom Murray: Creative Writing Fellow report.

**APROXIMATE BREAKDOWN OF WEEKLY HOURS**

Group visits:	6
Writers feedback	5
Admin	6.5
Total	<u>17.5</u>

**EVENTS/WORKSHOPS**

YOUNG WRITERS WORKSHOPS 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> September. Organized & Co tutored with Angie Townsend.

YOUNG WRITERS COMPETITION 26<sup>th</sup> September Hosted prize giving/Judges Comments.

DALKEITH ROTARY 19<sup>th</sup> October. Talk on Tyne & Esk.

RADIO INTERVIEW RE COLIN WILL. 26<sup>TH</sup> October. On Tyne and Esk.

WOTY AWARDS CEREMONY 31<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER Hosted,

LENNOXLOVE BOOK FESTIVAL LAUNCH EVENT 3<sup>RD</sup> November. One of the representatives of T&E

LENNOXLOVE BOOK FESTIVAL T&E READING EVENT 6<sup>TH</sup> November. Organized event and hosted readings.

CREATIVE WRITING DAY 12<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2011 Helped to organize event/liaise with writers/Co host on the day.

Workshops by Matthew Fitt; Catherine MacNeil; Gerry Cambridge and Zoe Starchan on subjects Scots/Writing for children/Poetry/Novels.

Workshop on playwriting by myself.

Social/readings by T&E members in the evening.

**SCRIVENS** Article and Workshop.

**WORKING WITH WRITING GROUPS.** Input includes Chairing group; Set writing tasks/format at meetings, and for future meetings; Workshops for meetings;\_Feedback on work read at group meetings & Publishing information.

Suggested different approaches to critique of work—This is ongoing.

**INDIVIDUAL WRITERS** Total feedback on work since last report 14/09/11

Stories complete 3.

Poetry complete 8

Plays ongoing 1 .

**PUBLISHING SCHEME.** 1 submission read/ feedback/advice given on editing.

**GROUP VISITS** Schedule of visits to T&E groups January—March 2012 in progress.

When confirmed will circulate and post on webpage.