

THE KEATS-SHELLEY REVIEW



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The Keats-Shelley Review continues under a new title the periodical which appeared as *The Keats-Shelley Memorial Bulletin*, the last number of which was published in 1985 as No. XXXVI of the sequence. The *Review* is centrally devoted to the study of the life and works of the younger Romantics (especially Keats, Shelley and Byron) and of their circle.

The cover shows what is probably the best likeness of Shelley: the bust by Marianne Leigh Hunt. By kind permission of the Provost and Fellows of Eton.

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THE KEATS-SHELLEY MEMORIAL
ASSOCIATION

Patron:
HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH
THE QUEEN MOTHER



The Keats-Shelley Awards Ceremony 26 May 1999

Judges and prize-winners celebrating together, from left to right: James Burton (first prize essayist); James Kidd (runner-up essayist); John Hartley Williams (runner-up poet); Claire Tomalin (Chairman of the Judges); Bamber Gascoine; Stuart Wilson (runner-up poet); Cate Parish (first prize poet).

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QUENTIN CREWE 1926–1998

Quentin Crewe, who died last November, had given a lifetime's service to the KSMA having joined the Committee at the age of nineteen in 1946 and having sat on it for fifty-two years, a record which is never likely to be equalled. As in the case of a number of other members over the years, his initial interest came through his family connections, his aunt, Lady Crewe, was Chairman and he was the great grandson of Richard Monckton Milnes.

Quentin's formal education was somewhat erratic. An illicit day in London brought his Eton career to a close: 'I was not sacked, but it was suggested that I should leave'. A spell being coached by an impoverished vicar in Henley was followed by two years at Cambridge studying the uncongenial subject of law then economics — 'a complete academic disaster'. In spite of this unpromising start, he became extremely knowledgeable and well read on many aspects of art and literature, especially the works of the Romantic poets, and was in every way a truly cultivated man.

Quentin's muscular dystrophy was diagnosed when he was six, and his mother was told that he was unlikely to survive beyond the age of sixteen. Her reaction was unusual. She did not mention the subject again for ten years, and then only to point out, when he expressed an interest in joining the Navy, that he would never be able to climb the rigging. No further medical advice was sought and no special allowance made for his deteriorating condition which left him in a wheelchair in his twenties. Whatever her motives may have been, Quentin acknowledged that nothing could have been done to cure him, and that because no one round him seemed to think about his illness he did not either, and never considered himself anything but normal. Perhaps this explains the triumphant way in which he overcame his ever increasing physical difficulties with a complete lack of self pity, leading a life of adventure and achievement in which he regarded nothing, from crossing the Empty Quarter to white water rafting, as impossible. As he said in the moving open letter he wrote to Christopher Reeve after the accident in which the actor was paralysed, 'You can do almost anything sitting down'.

All his life, Quentin was able to charm those he met. As his tutor at Eton wrote to another master, 'Do not be deceived by this boy's charm. If you allow it, he will do no work at all.' He was very attractive to women but admitted that he was a demanding husband. He was married and divorced three times, but having a nature remarkably free from jealousy or

bitterness, he remained on terms of warm friendship with his ex-wives, even when they had remarried, and his children brought him the greatest delight.

His contribution to the Association was both active and practical. He did not say much at committee meetings, but when he did it was invariably sound, constructive and to the point, and when he offered to undertake some task he could be relied on to be as good as his word. During his half century as a Trustee, the KSMA passed through many vicissitudes, including times of acute financial difficulty. In moments of crisis, Quentin was invaluable, always remaining calm and taking the longer view. He loved the House in Rome and was one of the strongest supporters of the Appeals which helped to secure its future.

Quentin was an inveterate traveller, but Italy held a special place in his heart. His earliest memories were of his childhood in Sicily, where his father was British Consul. As a young man he lived for some months in Lerici, reading to the author Percy Lubbock, whose sight was failing. He was captivated by the beauty of the view across the Gulf of Spezia, where Shelley and Byron were both remembered in local legend. There were living legends to be visited too; Bernhard Berenson at Settignano, Max Beerbohm at Rapallo, Harold Acton in the Villa la Pietra. In his autobiography, *Well, I Forget the Rest*, Quentin gives brilliant and amusing thumbnail sketches of these and innumerable other memorable characters from a huge and eclectic band of friends and acquaintances.

During the last two years his illness followed its inexorable course and his activities became a little more restricted, but in spite of this he continued as an active member of the Committee, drawing on his wide circle to arrange funding for a new guidebook for the House in Rome and introducing the Folio Society as sponsor of the essay and poetry competition, which he strongly supported.

Quentin will be fondly remembered and much missed for his courage, his wit and his long and valued support for the Association. It was typical of his lifelong interest in the Romantic poets that he chose to preface his autobiography with Browning's lines:

‘And did you once see Shelley plain,
And did he stop and speak to you?
And did you speak to him again?
How strange it seems, and new!’

KEATS–SHELLEY MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

Registered Charity No 212692

Annual Report for 1999

Our two new educational projects of 'outreach' in Britain have continued, both with outstanding success in their second years. As I write, the winners of the Keats–Shelley Prize 1999, sponsored by The Folio Society, have just been announced.

The judges were chaired by Claire Tomalin, the biographer and Shelleyan historian. This year's KSMA panel was made up of Vicki Feaver, Professor Nicholas Roe and Angus Graham-Campbell, Editor of *The Keats–Shelley Review*. There was outstanding quality in the best poems, which had the challenge of starting a modern response to Keats or Shelley with a line from one of the two poets; this obliged the judges to split the Prize three ways, with two runners-up. The winners were:

Poetry:

First Prize (£750)

Cate Parish, for *Ode to Someone in the Pool*

Runners Up (£125 each)

John Hartley Williams, for *Blaze*

Stuart Wilson, for *A Blue Domain*

Essays:

First Prize (£750)

James Burton, for *Keats and Coldness*

Runner Up (£250)

James Kidd, for *Carry on Writing: Keats' Lighter Verse*

The prize-giving took place with a completely full house at the Royal Society of Literature, 1 Hyde Park Gardens W2, and with many KSMA Friends and Competition entrants present. After presenting the awards Ms Tomalin gave the KSMA Annual Lecture, speaking on her researches and on new literary aspects of *Maurice, or the Fisher's Cot*, the long-lost Mary Shelley novella which as readers will recall from my report in the 1998 *Review* was discovered in a private house in Italy last year.

The first-prize essay by James Burton and the three prize-winning poems are published in this issue. We are most grateful to The Folio Society for their continuing and generous support of the Prize.

The Sheila Birkenhead Bursary Award Scheme, this year, was broadened in its scope to enable KSMA through a selection panel to offer bursaries on a rolling basis to full time graduate students in the UK to read papers at conferences on Romantic studies. Awards have been made to date this year for:

The British Association for Romantic Studies, (BARS) 6th International Residential Conference at Keele University, 29 July–1 August 1999:

Chantelle MacPhee, PhD student, Glasgow University, paper on *William Blake's The French Revolution: 'All the World's a Stage'* — £115

Adam Rounce, PhD student, Bristol University, paper on *Churchill, Shelley and Apocalyptic Imagery* — £115

Thomas Mole, PhD student at Bristol University, paper on *Scandal! Byronic Revelations* — £115

Simon Kovesi, PhD student at Nottingham Trent University, paper on *Mountains and Caves: John Clare's Erotic Revelations* — £115

The Summer Wordsworth Conference at Dove Cottage, August 1999:

Matthew Scott, DPhil student at Somerville College, Oxford, paper on *Hazlitt, Keats and the Aesthetics of Wonder* — £500

The NASSR Conference, Halifax, Canada, August 1999:

Chris Koenig-Woodward, PhD student St Edmund Hall, Oxford: *The Canadian Village of Oliver Goldsmith* — £115

Fringes of Romanticism Conference, University of Glasgow, April 1999:

Simon White, PhD student at York University: *The Promotion and Containment of Robert Bloomfield and Other Plebeian Writers of the Late 18th and early 19th centuries* — £90

Both these projects are reported on the Internet: on the Memorial House website, (see Report from Rome) and on the Association's page on the website of *Romanticism, on the Net*: <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~scat0385/ksma.html>.

In September *Maurice, or the Fisher's Cot* had its first publication, in hardback, by Penguin Viking in association with KSMA, with an extended introductory essay by Claire Tomalin. It was acclaimed by critics and featured in a special Bookworm programme on BBC2 with Ms Tomalin,

Catherine Payling and Signora Cristina Dazzi, the finder of the lost manuscript. As I write, the paperback edition is in preparation and will appear in July.

This year, it was decided to peg our programme of lectures to specific literary events of topical interest, in order to attract larger audiences. To this end, KSMA was associated with talks given by Ms Tomalin about the discovery of *Maurice*. These included a prestigious evening hosted by the British Council described in the Report from Rome, p. 7, and a talk by Ms Tomalin and *Maurice*-signing session to which Friends were especially invited, on 17 September in Waterstones Hampstead.

In case readers think we have abandoned all other Romantic subjects, it should be noted that earlier in the year, on 8 May, a lunchtime reading was given in London for Friends by Professor Jonathan Wordsworth of the Lyrical Ballads of Wordsworth and Coleridge, to mark the bicentenary of their first publication. A lecture given in Rome by KSMA Trustee Professor Nicholas Roe is recorded by the Curator in her Report.

Over the last year, from June 1998, the Association recruited fifty-seven new Friends, of which thirty competition entrants joined after their year's membership as Honorary Friends. While nineteen have been lost through resignation or death, this marks a steady upward increase.

In her Report from Rome, the Curator reports on an extremely active year in restoration and conservation in the Memorial House, maintained despite the continuing increase in visitors to the House on the approach to the *Due Mille*.

The Association has mourned the passing of Quentin Crewe, grandson of the Marquis of Crewe, who was one of the founders of the Keats-Shelley Memorial House and of KSMA. His mother, Lady Crewe, was for many years Chairman. Quentin himself had been a committee member for over fifty years since the age of nineteen, had acted as Secretary and later as Vice-Chairman. Recently, he had played a prominent part in making the Keats-Shelley Prize possible by introducing the Folio Society as sponsors. See 'A Tribute to Quentin Crewe', p. 2 by Juliet Townsend. We also mourned Professor Stuart Sperry, of the University of Indiana at Bloomington since 1959, a long-standing member of KSMA as well as of the American Association, and distinguished author of studies on both Keats and Shelley.

The only change to the London Trustees this year has been caused by the death of Mr Crewe. From London we would like to record our appreciation of the service as Rome Chairman of Professor Caroline Bruzelius, now returning to the US, and of Delia Lennie, who has resigned after many years as a supportive member of the Rome

Committee. We extend a warm welcome to the new Rome Chairman, Richard Alford.

Friends will be relieved or bemused to hear that, after an administrative saga worthy of Kafka, the Association has finally been registered as a legal entity this March with the Civil and Penal Tribunal of Rome. Despite its foundation over 1906-07 under the royal patronage of Edward VII and King Vittorio Emanuele III, there had been no surviving official record with the Italian civil authorities. This hard-won formality, due to the persistence of Roderick Cavaliero in London and Avvocato Antonello Corrado in Rome, will safeguard individuals from liabilities incurred when acting in Italy on behalf of the Association.

Harriet Cullen

REPORT FROM ROME

In this, the ninetieth year since the Museum was opened, we must think ahead to the future and ensure that steps are taken now to preserve and maintain the collection and environment of the Museum so that it will continue to flourish in the third millennium. The rolling programme of conservation and maintenance continues and, over the next two years, we plan to have the entire manuscript collection cared for by a specialist conservator; our wax Byron carnival mask has returned newly cleaned, revealing features and colours unseen for decades; one of our paintings of the Protestant Cemetery, showing signs of deterioration, has been cleaned and conserved.

Two nineteenth century busts of Keats and Shelley by William Wetmore Storey are in the process of being cleaned and restored as I write. In early 1999 the Museum closed for one month for essential rewiring. We took advantage of this opportunity to give the entrance and staircase a much-needed redecoration and to enhance the safety features and level of illumination, and my grateful thanks here to our architect Roberto Einaudi, who has given unstintingly of his time and advice during a period of some upheaval. The graves of Shelley and Trelawny have also been restored thanks to the generosity of the British Ambassador who very kindly allocated a sum of money for this purpose. In the next twelve months we will turn our attention to book restoration, and to the woodwork in the Museum which is suffering from woodworm damage for which we will seek the assistance of ICCROM who have been so helpful to us already in their assessment of the environmental conditions prevailing within the Museum. The preliminary conclusions of that survey demonstrate, in a very encouraging way, that the Museum does not suffer from extremes of either temperature or humidity and that we do not need to install equipment to moderate either.

Access to research material in the collection is also a top priority and we have begun to transfer our library card catalogue to an automated library system. The transfer of the records will be completed in 2001 and the new catalogue will make it easier for staff and users of the library alike to find relevant research material. As part of our ongoing commitment to making the collection more accessible the manuscript collection and Museum archive will be added to complete the project and, to this end, we were delighted to welcome, in April 1999, two members of staff from the British Library, Sally Brown and Elizabeth James. Sally has been helping us with the cataloguing of the manuscript collection and Museum archive, and Elizabeth with our extensive collection of periodicals.

We continue to attract every-increasing numbers of visitors from all over the world, but are fortunate that the uniquely tranquil atmosphere is unaffected. We are committed to preserving the distinctiveness of the experience for visitors and will ensure that this is never compromised. Opening the Museum on Saturdays, a change we made in June 1998, means that many more Italian visitors and those planning a weekend in Rome can now include a trip to the Keats-Shelley House. The Museum is now also a regular participant in initiatives organised by the Comune di Roma for the promotion of the city's cultural attractions.

The UK held the Presidency of the European Union in the first six months of 1998 and the British Embassy held events in Italy to mark the occasion. On 11 June the Embassy threw open its gates to the schools of Rome which had participated in the Keats-Shelley annual children's poetry competition. The day was hugely successful and was attended by more than six hundred Roman school children of all nationalities. There were events and activities to suit all ages: informal sports, games, donkey rides, classical music and Food Italia provided a clown as well as unlimited supplies of orange juice. Penguin Italia generously supplied all the prizes and the highlight of the day for all present was the presentation of prizes and reading by the renowned British poet, Tony Harrison. Mr Harrison read several of his poems including his long work inspired by the life and poems of John Keats — 'A Kumquat for John Keats', and then congratulated each of the twelve winners. Mr Harrison was able to spend a few days in Rome following the Embassy-Keats-Shelley House Open Day and worked in the Baths of Caracalla on his new piece, *Prometheus*, partly influenced by Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*, also composed in the Baths of Caracalla. He went on to Turin to give a reading hosted by the British Council and presented in collaboration with the Keats-Shelley House. As ever, the Poetry Competition attracted a large number of entries and the standard was very high. For the first time ever the judges of the 1998 competition selected a winning poem in the English language written by an Italian.

To mark the publication of *Maurice* Clare Tomalin, the editor of the book, gave a presentation at the British Council in Rome, followed by an informal reception. The event was a huge success attended by more than two hundred people. Cristina Dazzi, one of the owners of the manuscript, attended the event and we took much pleasure in welcoming her to the Keats-Shelley House for the first time. The book was also included in a broadcast of the BBC Bookworm programme and I travelled to San Marcello Pistoiese with the BBC for the filming of interviews in the house and archive of the Dazzis.

Professor Nicholas Roe gave a stimulating talk at the British School at Rome in September 1998 on the occasion of our International Meeting, entitled 'John Keats and Leigh Hunt: Life Perspectives'.

In February 1999 I was invited by the American Women's Association of Rome to talk to them about the events surrounding the discovery of *Maurice* and the histories of the people involved, including Byron, Claire Clairmont and Mary Shelley.

We have also welcomed a group of graduate students from Simon Hopkins University in Vancouver and were able to arrange a talk on the enduring attraction of Rome for British writers and painters, with particular reference to Keats and Shelley.

The museum's work with young people continues successfully with more schools than ever visiting between September 1998 and May 1999. In that period we were visited by more than two hundred school groups from many different countries. I would like to express my thanks to Allegra Bennett and Antonio Sorriento for their hard work in making the school visits the popular success that they are. We have also begun a periodic programme of work experience for school leavers and our first student, Marianna Ware, was with us for three months in 1998. The experience proved very successful for both the Museum and for Marianna and the programme will continue in 1999 with students from St Stephen's International School. In March the Museum received a generous donation of \$2,000 from the Keats-Shelley Association of America, and in May a further \$1,000.

Caroline Bruzelius, Chairman of the KSMA Committee in Rome for two years is, regrettably, returning to the United States to continue her academic career. We will miss her wisdom, care for the Museum and its staff, and her friendship. We wish her good fortune and every success for the future. Richard Alford, Director of the British Council in Italy, will replace her. Sadly for us Delia Lennie, a long serving member of the Committee in Rome and a dear friend to the Keats-Shelley House decided that the time had come for her to retire. We are delighted to welcome Mary Wilsey, journalist and long-time Rome resident as a British member to fill Delia's vacancy. In the course of the year Silvia Marinoni resigned as Assistant Curator to join the staff of the British Embassy, and was replaced by Allegra Bennett.

We are always very pleased to welcome Friends of the KSMA to the House in Rome and I direct readers to the notice of the opening times of the house elsewhere in the Review. I would also like to remind readers that it is possible to rent an apartment in the Keats-Shelley House, those who are interested should contact The Landmark Trust in Maidenhead on 01628 525920.

Catherine Payling