

POETRY 2016

The themes covered so far this year have been:

JANUARY 2016: Family Life

FEBRUARY 2016: Poems by a poet whose first or second name begins with “A”

MARCH 2016: Water

APRIL 2016: Lyric Poetry

There was a smaller than usual attendance at the Group's April meeting but we had an excellent afternoon listening to that month's subject "Poems that had been set to music".

We had found poems from writers as diverse as the Lowland Scots "Rabbie" Burns to the Australian "Banjo" Paterson. Following our usual format each of us read the poem we had chosen and in some cases we then heard it sung as people had brought CD's to illustrate the item.

Poems from Housman's ***A Shropshire Lad*** were a favourite with Mary, who used to be a Shropshire lass. Works from poets as diverse as Yeats, Leonard Cohen, and Joel Houston. Even Bob Dylan got a look in which goes to prove that we range far beyond the sort of poetry most of us learnt at school.

And "Banjo" Paterson? Well, in 1895 in the Outback he wrote the poem that became the song ***Waltzing Matilda*** and in 2016 the chorus of this was lustily sung by five Poms of mature years in a lounge in Carlton! I think he would have been be *stoked* (Aussie for pleased) to know.

Our Poetry readings always give rise to discussion and the sharing of memories and experiences and this was no exception as we considered the position of the indigenous people in colonised countries, the merits of the various performers heard and the emotions and memories evoked by the poetry and music of the afternoon.

As usual, Mary provided the ideal welcoming venue and excellent tea and biscuits.

If you are considering trying the Poetry Group I have to say that this was not quite a typical meeting. We usually stick to poetry and we have never before actually burst into song. However it was typical of the effort and enthusiasm our members put into finding and reading their chosen poems and the pleasure we had from sharing them.

Rene Battershall