



**Alliance of Literary Societies**  
President: Claire Harman  
[www.allianceofliterarysocieties.org.uk](http://www.allianceofliterarysocieties.org.uk)

**Newsletter: Autumn/Winter 2017**

# Not Only, But ALSO...

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## **1. ALS WEEKEND BASH 2018**

Next year's ALS weekend (which includes our AGM, but is much, much more) will be held in Birmingham, 18 – 20 May. It will be hosted by the Alliance, featuring Tim Robertson, Director of the Royal Society of Literature, Michael Hall of the Francis Brett Young Society and speakers from other local societies.

Please put this date into your diary and circulate the invitation to all your members. This annual event is always a good way to learn more about other writers – and we are brimming with ideas for things to do in Birmingham. It's a great cultural city – and they do say we have more canals than Venice!

Most of the 'action' takes place on the Saturday, with talks, maybe a guided walk, and of course the Saturday evening dinner (where volunteers read short passages from their favourite authors).

More detail will be circulated in the New Year, but do keep an eye on the website, where we also have reports of past festivals. This year's event was in Edinburgh with the Siegfried Sassoon Fellowship and Wilfred Owen Association, where we were delighted to meet lots of people who hadn't been before, and we hope that they have been persuaded that it's a weekend event to look forward to!

*Linda J. Curry*

*Further information and booking forms will be available on the website in the new year and in the spring edition of *Not Only, But ALSO...*(ed)*

## 2. Report from ALS 2017 AGM

The June AGM weekend was hosted jointly by the Siegfried Sassoon Fellowship and the Wilfred Owen Association. For those who didn't attend an optional talk at the Camera Obscura, the weekend began with a walk through the imposing gate of Edinburgh Castle, a setting well known to, and used by, quite a few of "our" authors. We had been invited by the Governor of the Castle to the Great Hall for an evening of music and verse about Wilfred Owen and the Great War. It was a moving experience, especially the piece played on the Wilfred Owen violin, made from wood from the grounds of the former Craiglockhart Military Hospital, and set the tone perfectly for the following day. This was spent at Craiglockhart itself, now part of Napier University and home to the War Poets Collection and, for some time during the War, home also to Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon, who met there in 1917 while being treated for shell-shock.

Over coffee on Saturday morning we caught up with friends and browsed the publications of our fellow societies, before settling down to the day's business. We were welcomed by Professor Andrea Nolan, VC of Napier, who talked about the role of Craiglockhart in treating what we now call PTSD. Linda Curry, ALS chair, then introduced our new President, Claire Harman, who described the obsession with a writer that is necessary to writing a biography. She then introduced a subject dear to her, and to many ALS members: public libraries. Writers who become the subjects of biographies and who inspire literary societies have a band of what she called "ultra appreciators", people well-placed, she suggested, to campaign on behalf of libraries, through individual society websites, through social media, through the ALS itself, and to the public at large.

The first of the day's talks, by Professor Alistair McLeery of Napier University, looked at the First World War from a Scottish perspective, while musing on what exactly that might be. Both Neil M. Gunn and Lewis Grassie Gibbon wrote powerfully on the effects of war and poverty on local communities, and both eventually came to see that catharsis and hope may come with a sense of oneness with the land. Indeed, Gunn, a founding member of the Scottish National Party, pursued an almost mystical thread with his final work, *The Atom of Delight* – only the land endures.

The AGM followed lunch and a visit by many to the War Poets Collection. Linda Curry described the ALS's new website and announced the theme for the 2018 ALSO, 'Unreliable Narrators', while Cally Phillips, the new Newsletter Editor, suggested that she would like to change the focus of the newsletter so that it doesn't simply tell members what has already happened. Linda also encouraged members to consider joining the ALS committee.

Finally, Dr Hazel Hutchison (University of Aberdeen) talked about the soundscapes of war. She pointed out that there are no sound recordings of the First World War, although new technology meant that warfare had become unprecedentedly noisy. Poets responded to the desire to capture these sounds with imitative language and perhaps, by doing so, helped to process the physical and psychological effects of war. I found this talk particularly evocative, even more so as it was followed by more music and poetry, the "other" soundscapes of war.

The day ended with dinner and more conversation and in the tradition of these occasions, readings by representatives from many of the member societies, making it a most pleasant evening. Next morning, those who remained went on a literary tour of Edinburgh, a city with no shortage of sights associated with ALS authors. Warmest thanks are due to the Wilfred Owen Association and the Siegfried Sassoon Fellowship for organising such an enjoyable weekend, and in such splendid surroundings. *Jodie Roberts*

### **3. From our President: *Campaign for Libraries***

*'The very existence of libraries affords the best evidence that we may yet have hope for the future of man.'* T.S. Eliot

In the spring newsletter Maggie Parsons urged members of the ALS to join the growing movement to help keep local libraries open and to fight the cuts which threaten the very continuation of this vital and beloved service. A very good place to start, she said wisely, is to use your local library as much as possible, both for borrowing (and requesting) books and as meeting places and possible venues for events connected with your particular society or author.

Members who came to the AGM in June will have heard more on this subject from me and members of the committee: it's a cause dear to all our hearts, and what more natural ally could the library system have than the ALS, the ultimate specialists in literary enthusiasm and advocacy! With around 50,000 members across more than a hundred groups currently in the Alliance, I believe we can have a powerful voice in pressing to preserve and nourish local libraries, working alongside other bodies such as the Royal Society of Literature, the Library Campaign, PEN and the ALCS.

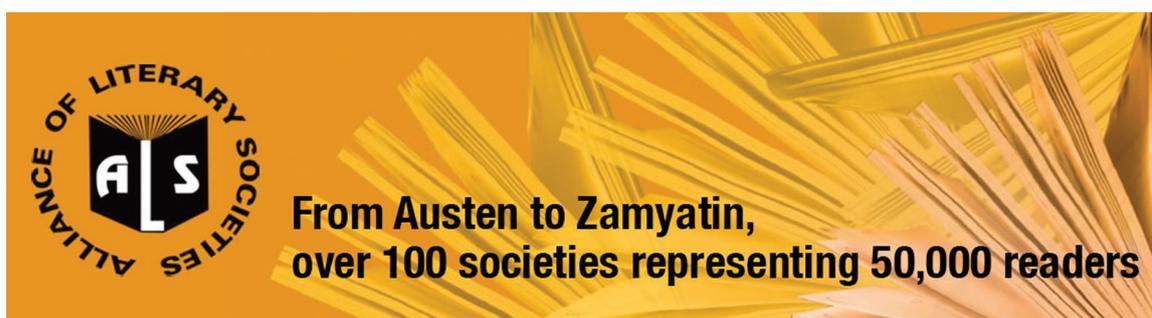
So, we hope there will be some national campaigning ahead, but in the immediate term, I'd like to invite members to go to their own library shelves, rummage around, rack their brains and find references to libraries that crop up in the works of 'your' author, especially in letters, diaries, memoirs and essays. When you find something, do please send it in to the newsletter so that we can share these stories and celebrate the place of libraries in all our lives, and in the lives and works of ALS authors. (Members of the Philip Larkin Society obviously have an unfair head start.)

I'd like to kick off with a scene from 1811, when Jane Austen and her sister Cassandra were visiting the local circulating library in Alton, choosing books with their niece Anna (a voracious consumer of novels, who was in the habit of 'running them over' and passing on the gist of the plots to her aunts). Austen had been writing fiction privately since the early 1790s, but had only just got into print, anonymously, and the secret of her authorship was known only to her very closest friends. So when Anna picked up a copy of *Sense and Sensibility*, it was without any knowledge of who had written it. Both Cassandra and Jane must have been intensely curious to see the teenager's reaction, but Anna took one look and tossed the book aside, exclaiming to the barely-contained amusement of her aunts, 'Oh that must be rubbish I am sure from the title!'

Fortunately, others weren't so hasty, and the book, which had been published cheaply to appeal precisely to the lucrative circulating-library market, sold out its first edition, earning Miss Austen a tidy £140.

*Claire Harman*

#### 4. Moving with the Times – The Future of *Not Only, But ALSo...*



The new website is up and functioning and hopefully you've all visited it. While we appreciate that some societies are still fiercely print-based, we feel it is important to provide our communications in as wide a range and as easy access as possible – and this means going digital and embracing new technology. Our promotional literature states that we represent some 50,000 readers and at present the only way we can communicate with them is via asking the 120 odd society representatives to pass on information.

We would like to be able to reach these 50,000 readers (and many more) directly with information about our societies, and in the 21<sup>st</sup> century the most efficient and effective way to do this is to embrace technology. The website becomes not just an advertising page, but a dynamic 'go-to' destination where anyone in the world can find out information about our member societies, their authors, and the activities you all work so hard to promote and run.

Changes are ongoing in the way we communicate and disseminate our information and in the future we hope to be able to put most of the features and articles you find in *Not Only, But ALSo* up on the website. Don't worry, we won't cut you off without updates – we are currently debating the best way to reach most members – and a 'mixed' approach will continue for the foreseeable future. So please, if you are a society representative receiving this newsletter, pass it on to as many of your members as you can. And if you have opinions about how you would like to receive information (as well as what you would like to receive information on) in future please get in touch via email (contact details are at the bottom of this newsletter and on the website:

<https://allianceofliterarysocieties.wordpress.com/contact-us/>

For the present the key thing to note is that *Events/Festivals and Conferences* are all now listed on the website by week and month. If you go to the Calendar on the website and click 'agenda' [\[or click here\]](#) you will be able to see a list – and you will perhaps be amazed by how many society activities are going on! A twice annual newsletter obviously misses many (if not most) of these events, so to be sure of getting as big an audience as possible please send your events information direct to **ljc1049@gmail.com** by email. The website events calendar is updated on a rolling basis.

Please also direct your members to look at this calendar regularly – it will increase awareness of not just your own society but other events by 'like-minded' societies.

If you use social media, send us your events (or post them yourself) on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/allianceofliterarysocieties/>

## 5. An offer from Slightly Foxed:



Do you carry elderly Penguins in your pockets?  
Do books furnish your room?

If so, we think you will enjoy *Slightly Foxed*, the lively and elegant quarterly magazine that unearths books of lasting interest, old and new. Each issue contains 96 pages of personal recommendations from contributors who write with passion and wit.

We're delighted to reveal that the new Autumn issue of *Slightly Foxed* includes articles on two authors whose dedicated societies belong to the ALS. Open its pages to follow Rudyard Kipling to Simla, take a turn in *New Grub Street* with George Gissing, and much more besides . . .

All back issues are available - Single issues from £11 - Subscriptions from £40

### Special offer for ALS members

Receive a free handsome dark grey jute book bag with your first order over £10.

Quote code **ALS17** online or by phone.

Visit our online shop and the Foxed blog: [www.foxedquarterly.com](http://www.foxedquarterly.com)

Telephone order line: 020 7033 0258 (Mon – Fri, 9.30 a.m. – 5.30 p.m.)

Find us on Instagram, Twitter & Facebook @FoxedQuarterly

*'Slightly Foxed* is unique among literary magazines. It has introduced many of us to books we have come to love. I would not be without it.'

 Michael Holroyd

## 6. A Trilogy with a Difference

The following three articles are written in response to member requests for information on issues which, while perhaps not destined to set the heathers alight, are of interest (and no little importance) to many member societies. Read on for the a,b,c's...

### **a: Registered Charitable Status**

The question of whether or not to become a registered charity is one which often sparks a lot of discussion in societies. The two main concerns seem to be that (a) it might require a degree of legal expertise to take the society through the process; and (b) it could lead to restrictions in the way that the society operates (with the Charity Commission acting as Big Brother). I shall tackle each of these concerns below.

So, let's start by looking at the pros and cons of taking out registration.

#### **Pros**

- Having a registered charity number to quote on grant applications gives your society credibility.
- Being a registered charity can give you discounts when hiring venues (as sometimes they take off the VAT).
- You can include a Gift Aid form with your membership subscription form, so that you can claim back gift aid each year on monies paid by those consenting taxpayers within your membership (subscriptions, donations, etc., though not on sales goods!). This is 25p in the £, so can boost your coffers considerably.
- The Charity Commission (CC) will assist you in producing a constitution which will help to safeguard the society and those who manage it. They will also provide helpful advice in other areas. They do not interfere in the day-to-day running of your society. It is only if you alert them to an issue that they will get engaged.

#### **Cons**

- You will probably have to rewrite your constitution and get it passed at an AGM or EGM. The CC's website contains guidelines on how to do this (document CC22b) and has model documents for you follow.
- If your society becomes the victim of any fraud (e.g. a trustee embezzles money), you do have to report it to the CC and they will investigate to ensure that you are doing all you can to rectify the situation. They will also come up with advice as to how you can set in place future safeguards.
- If your society's income is less than £10,000, you do not have to provide an annual return, although you should keep your contact and financial records up to date in case they are required by the CC. If your society's income is more than £10,000 then you need to submit an annual return to the CC. This takes the form of a simple online form to amend any changes in trustees, and society operations; in addition to the final income total and expenditure total for the year. You are also required to have your annual accounts examined (by someone known to your society, not elected by the CC) – but this is best practice anyway – as a safeguard for your society and your members.

So, now that, hopefully, I've persuaded you that registration is a good thing, let's see if you are eligible to apply! You are eligible to apply if:

- You have a charitable purpose and are not-for-profit. Of the categories set out by the CC, the most relevant would be (1) the advancement of education, and (2) the advancement of the arts, culture, heritage or science.

- Your organisational objects (usually a standard part of your constitution) are charitable – again ‘the advancement of education’ is key here.
- You do not have any directly political objectives in your constitution. You can engage in political activities but only in support of your charitable objectives.
- You conform to any of the criteria below.

There are different types of charity:

- **Charitable Unincorporated Association.** This is a membership organisation which does not have its own legal existence, which means that its trustees are liable for debts/obligations.
- **Charitable Trust.** It usually manages money or property for charitable purposes, and is much the same as the above.
- **Charitable Incorporated Organisation.** This can be the same as either of the above in the way that it is run, but it has its own legal existence, and is more complex to set up, but trustees have no individual liability for debts, etc.
- **Charitable Company.** This is a limited company with charitable aims and is similar to a CIO.

Charitable Unincorporated Associations and Charitable Trusts with a gross annual income of £5,000 or more are expected to register with the Charity Commission – although they are not obliged to do so. If your gross annual income is less than £5,000 then you cannot become a registered charity. You still have charitable status, however, although as an unregistered charity.

CIOs have to register, regardless of their income as they do not formally exist as charities until they are registered.

This may sound complex, but it really isn't.

The Charity Commission is there to help and advise. They have lots of guidance notes and a helpline, which you can access via their website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission>.

*Linda J. Curry*

*There are slightly different frameworks in Scotland and to find out about these your first port of call is The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) whose website is <https://www.oscr.org.uk/> (ed)*

## **b: Data Protection**

Are you prepared for the new EU General Data Protection Regulation which comes into force on May 25<sup>th</sup> 2018? All organisations which hold personal and private data, from their customers or members, such as mailing addresses, e-mail addresses and telephone numbers, are required to comply with the terms of the regulation.

Although the UK is exiting the EU, the advice of UK regulators, the Charity Commission and the Information Commissioner's Office is that all relevant UK bodies should still ensure that they have robust systems in place that meet the standards of the regulation. This is particularly important as the UK is in the process of transposing the EU regulation into UK law. Non-compliance may mean you risk facing fines imposed by regulators. The EU regulation will therefore have an impact on all charities including literary societies because we maintain lists of our members with contact details. Of course you may be

already familiar with the 1998 UK Data Protection Act and will already have fulfilled requirements aimed at securing the careful handling and storage of personal data and can demonstrate you apply good practice.

The new regulation aims to harmonise and strengthen existing laws on how personal data is used and handled. An important element of the new regulation is transparency concerning how you process personal data, whether this is shared with a third party and what assurances you are able to give your customers and members about their legal right to access their own data which you hold. It is a good idea to publish a simple Privacy Policy, and make this freely available to your members. You could for instance publish this on your public website. A good example of a web-based Privacy Policy can be found on the UK government's information portal and website at: <https://www.gov.uk/help/privacy-policy>.

Another key requirement of the new regulation is that organisations must contact all their customers or members and seek their permission if they wish to continue to be approached by them in the future. This is probably only likely to affect literary societies, who are members of ALSO, if, for instance, they are regularly and actively involved in fund raising with their members. In most cases concerning literary societies, since our members have voluntarily submitted their personal data to enable a society to send them information, such as journals, newsletters, general news and other information, they would probably not need to do this. But it would be wise to consult with experts further if there is any uncertainty especially if you plan to engage in a fund raising project with your members. In most cases, if you are not planning regular fund raising with your members, your Privacy Policy should be enough to demonstrate compliance with the regulation.

The following news was issued by the Charity Commission and the Information Commissioner's Office in December 2016: 'The Charity Commission, the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales, and the Fundraising Regulator, are issuing an alert to all charities. It reminds trustees that they must, in addition to following charity law requirements, ensure that there are systems in place at their charity to identify and comply with any data protection laws and regulations that apply to its activities.' For more information see the UK government's information website at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/regulators-issue-joint-alert-about-compliance-with-data-protection-law> and the Information Commissioner's Office at: <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/charity/> Also see relevant guidance issued by the Charity Commission on fund raising at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charities-and-fundraising-cc20>

*Chris Thomas, Hon. Secretary, The Powys Society*

### **c: Public Liability Insurance**

If you hold any events during the year, you do need to consider taking out public liability insurance? Most venues will not cover you under theirs (although, obviously, it is worth asking them).

Why PLI? It protects you if anyone attending suffers personal injury through attending your event. It can pay for the costs of subsequent legal expenses or compensation claims, and it should cover product liability (if you sell goods) and property owners' liability if your society is responsible for or owns a building. You might also need to consider damage to any venue you hire – checking whether your hire contract means that you carry liability for this if anything goes wrong.

You can also tag onto it other bits of insurance you might require, such as fire and theft of sales stock.

If you are considering taking out this sort of insurance, it might be worth your contacting other groups in your area to see who they insure with and what their experience has been (for example, historical societies, U3A, etc.).

You can, of course, Google charity PLI on the web, but it's often a good idea to get some recommendations – and always get more than one quote. Make sure that you cover everything. So, for example, if you have an event which includes a guided walk, you might need to include that – unless you make it clear on the programme/booking form that the walk is undertaken at participants' own risk.

If holding an event, like a festival which goes beyond a single hired room and which is likely to attract large numbers of people (particularly older folk), you might also want to ensure that you have a couple of first aiders in attendance. This may sound as if it is a little over the top, but it is worth considering.

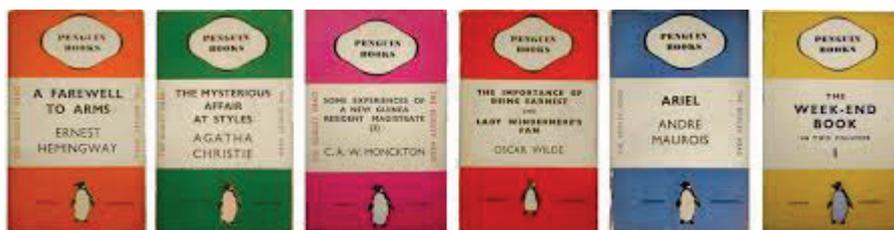
*Linda J Curry*

*If you have other issues you'd like us to write about please email us with the topic. We hope to put these, and similar articles, up on the website in future so that you can refer to them when necessary. (ed)*

## **7. News from the Societies**

We are happy to receive copies of newsletters from our member societies. We enjoy reading about what you are getting up to, and where possible, sharing this information. Since the last newsletter we've received newsletters from the following societies: Hazlitt Society, Elmet Trust (Ted Hughes), Friends of Dymock Poets, John Buchan Society, John Moore Society, Powys Society and the Oscar Wilde society.

Can we remind all member societies that if they want to spread the word as widely as possible regarding their events/conferences/festivals, they should send information directly to our website [www.allianceofliterarysocieties.org.uk](http://www.allianceofliterarysocieties.org.uk) which will be entered on the new events calendar. This is the go-to place for what's happening at the societies, updated on a rolling basis, avoiding that irritating scenario when your event happens just after a newsletter deadline!



## 8. Pick up a Penguin?

I have for a few years been the organiser of the annual get-together of The Penguin Collectors Society, a small charity with some 400 members which encourages the conservation and study of Penguin books. It is quite similar to the Alliance's AGM, though we are about books rather than about literature: some related cultural activity, a great deal of conversation, and an informal dinner, spread from a Friday afternoon to a Sunday morning.

We have been at Napier, as the Alliance was in June, and in recent years at: Gladstone's Library, Hawarden, Flint; in a church in Richmond, London; a small public hall and a cramped pub in Sedbergh, Cumbria; the former Diocesan Training College, Sarum College, in Salisbury; and a 'media centre' and concrete hotel in central Sheffield; and we gather this year at a gallery with a related collection, in Bedford.

My question, as we start to plan for next year, is, where else should we consider going? We seek venues which are:

- (a) spread around the country, but, when outside south-east England, where half our members live, accessible by train;
- (b) more-or-less residential, which makes it much easier for people to spend time talking with each other than if they're spread around lots of B&Bs and hotels;
- (c) can accommodate 60 to 70 people in meeting rooms; and
- (d) affordable – the market in university accommodation in September, our preferred month, let alone in conference hotels, being dominated by the commercial, and to some extent the wedding, markets, and almost all too expensive.

Gladstone's Library and Sarum College have been our best venues to date.

Do you think that we have got our specification right, or are we being over-ambitious? And do members societies have any suggestions of specific venues which even roughly match it?

We would be very grateful for any help that you can provide, and will of course be happy to share more widely what we learn.

*James Mackay*  
*Trustee, The Penguin Collectors Society)*  
*Contact : james.mackay@talktalk.net*

## 9. Walking With Authors

In the recent round of newsletters we've received, we got wind of a number of literary walks. Many societies find walks a way of engaging with their members, and this year, several were key features of AGMs. May saw the Hazlitt Society Walk and our own ALS weekend had a walk in Edinburgh on June 4, while the John Moore Society Walk, 'Literary Tewkesbury', was held in August and the John Buchan 'Witchwood Walk' was held in September.

With a theme emerging, we would like to feature literary related walks in the Spring edition of *Not Only, But ALS*. If your society has had one, is going to have one in 2018, or runs them as a regular part of society activities, please get in touch. We are looking for articles of no more than 500 words, and if you have them, a couple of pictures (preferably in jpeg format). We would welcome your copy by the newsletter deadline of 1<sup>st</sup> March 2018 to [callyphillipsis@gmail.com](mailto:callyphillipsis@gmail.com). Walking with authors is a great way to advertise your society/author and perhaps make new friends – as well as staying healthy.

## 10. New Publications

*The J.M.Barrie Literary Society*: To follow up from the recent republications of a number of Barrie's lesser known works, the J.M.Barrie Literary Society have produced new editions of *Sentimental Tommy* and *Tommy and Grizel* with introductions by society member Dr Sarah Green. You can buy these direct from [www.unco.scot](http://www.unco.scot) online bookstore, [http://www.unco.scot/store/c51/J.M.BARRIE\\_LIT\\_SOC\\_COLLECTION.html](http://www.unco.scot/store/c51/J.M.BARRIE_LIT_SOC_COLLECTION.html) as well as Amazon, or other retailers.

*The John Moore Society*: John Moore features prominently in a book to be published in September, on the relationship between writers and landscapes. Entitled *The Coloured Counties – Literary Landscapes of the Heart of England*, it is the sequel to Anthony Gibson's critically acclaimed *With Magic in my Eyes – West Country Literary Landscapes*, this time taking as its focus the region stretching from Wiltshire in the south to Shropshire in the north.

Besides John Moore, the authors covered include A. E. Housman, Edward Thomas and the other Dymock poets, Laurie Lee, Richard Jefferies, John Masefield, Ivor Gurney and many more. An entire chapter is devoted to Bredon Hill! Published by Fairfield Books, you can purchase it direct from the publishers online:

<http://fairfieldbooks.org.uk/#/books/theColouredCounties>

*The Oscar Wilde Society*: *Jack the Ripper: Case Closed* is Arthur Conan Doyle's account of the events of 1894, the year of the return of Jack the Ripper. Written by the Oscar Wilde Society President, Gyles Brandreth, there are discounts for members of the OWS. The rest of us can purchase it from bookstores, or Amazon online:

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Jack-Ripper-Closed-Gyles-Brandreth/dp/1472152328/>

*The Zamyatin Society* is offering ALS members a FREE EBOOK on 20<sup>th</sup> October only, to mark the 7<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publication of the 'ultimate' dystopic novel: *Brand Loyalty* (by none other than Cally Phillips, your newsletter editor!) The paperback is available at a reduced price of £5.99 (+ postage) till the end of October.

## 11. ALS Parody Contest.

A parody contest has been in the offing for some time, but now some details can be revealed.

The contest will be open to everyone in the UK over the age of 18 and will be sponsored by a publisher, magazine or newspaper. A small entry fee will be charged, but individual members of societies belonging to the ALS will enjoy a reduction in this fee. There will be two age groups: 18 – 25 and over 25 . Six substantial prizes will be awarded—three in each age group.

Any author writing in English and represented in a standard dictionary of literary biography can be parodied, but contestants choosing a writer whose work is familiar to the judge or judges (who will have an expert knowledge of English and American literature) will naturally gain an advantage over someone who chooses an obscure or non-literary writer, such as a writer of thrillers or crime fiction. Common sense should prevail in such matters.

Any type of literature can be parodied, though the main choices are expected to be novels, poetry, drama, children's fiction and essays. Poetry or drama should not exceed 40 lines; novels, children's fiction and essays should not exceed 500 words.

The six winning entries will be published.

The judges' decision is final. Further details will be announced in due course.

*R. M. Healey, ALS committee and Charles Lamb Society*

## 12. Comings and Goings

We would like to welcome societies who have joined since the last newsletter: Margery Allingham, J. M. Barrie, George Gissing, William Hazlitt, Royal Society of Literature, Shipston & District Literary Society, R. S. Thomas & M. E. Eldridge, The Russian Poetic Crew. The Lewis Carroll Society, the Nancy Blackett Trust, Burney Society & Elmet Trust have re-joined and the Elsie Oxenham Society has sadly departed.

**Who are the Russian poetic crew?** Since you ask, RPC is a community of lovers of Russian poetry and a reading group based in Manchester. The society was founded in December 2016, when Svetlana (RPC Chair) came up with the idea of reading poetry in public. Fortunately her idea was supported by other Russian-speaking Mancunians. Participants read, for example, poems of Alexander Pushkin, Feodor Tutchchev, Anna Akhmatova, Osip Mandelstam, Marina Zvetava, Evgeniy Yevtushenko, Boris Ryzji, Josef Brodsky and many others. Poems in English including those by Shakespeare, Jeff Foster, Dylan Thomas and Billy J. Armstrong are also read. There are about 90 active members in the RPC. They usually meet in the Main Library of the University of Manchester. The Russian Poetic Crew also collaborates with the Manchester theatre community, including a special performance in King's Army dedicated to the Second World War blockade of Leningrad and the poems of the two great poets involved: Anna Akhmatova and Olga Berggolts. The society actively seeks co-operation with other Alliance societies.

### **13. Last but not least**

You are probably battenning down the hatches for winter now, but it's time to think about spring already. Don't forget to submit your article for the 2018 *ALSo* journal (the theme is Unreliable Narrators) before the deadline of February 1<sup>st</sup> 2018.

If you have any 'walk' related content to share, or any other information you'd like to see in the next edition of *Not Only, But ALSo...* please send it through to [callyphillipsis@gmail.com](mailto:callyphillipsis@gmail.com) before the deadline of March 1<sup>st</sup>. The next edition will be published on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

#### **ALS Contacts**

**We welcome your feedback and information. Please contact as follows:**

**Website:** [ljc1049@gmail.com](mailto:ljc1049@gmail.com)

**Newsletter:** [callyphillipsis@gmail.com](mailto:callyphillipsis@gmail.com), or  
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