



THE KIPLING SOCIETY

FOUNDED 1927

Registered Charity No.278885

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CHAIRMAN'S NEWSLETTER – JANUARY 2019

HONORARY SECRETARY URGENTLY NEEDED

Unfortunately, our Honorary Secretary Dr Simon Machin had to resign from office shortly before Christmas for personal reasons. I am grateful for Simon's valuable input to the Society for the short time he was in office.

Other members of Council are currently carrying out the Secretary's tasks but it is vital for the future of the Society that we find a permanent replacement as soon as possible.

The post involves organizing four Council meetings a year plus the AGM and Annual Luncheon, along with liaison on behalf of the Society with a number of voluntary and statutory bodies, fellow members and the general public.

Please do contact me if you would like further details.

Alternatively, should you not consider this to be the role for you but would be interested instead in being the Society's Treasurer, I would be more than happy to discuss a 'job swap'

ANNUAL LUNCHEON

Application forms for tickets for the Annual Luncheon were included in the December edition of *The Kipling Journal*. They were printed before we knew of Simon Machin's resignation. Whilst Simon will forward any applications he received to me, it would be helpful to us both if you could send your applications straight to me instead at the address at the top of this newsletter

The luncheon will be held on Wednesday 8th May at the Army & Navy Club, 36 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 3JN at 12.30 for 1 pm. The speaker will be

Professor Daniel Karlin, who will talk on 'Rudyard Kipling and Robert Browning'. The cost remains £65.

I hope to see as many as possible of you there, so please do send your application forms to me sooner rather than later.

MEETING DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Wednesday 13 February 2019, 5.30 for 6pm in the Evelyn Wrench Room, Royal Over-Seas League, Park Place, St James's Street, London, SW1A 1LR: John Radcliffe and Alastair Wilson 'Transcribing Carrie Kipling's Diaries'

This replaces the previously advertised topic for which arrangements unfortunately could not be concluded.

Wednesday 10 April 2019, 5.30 for 6pm in the Hall of India and Pakistan, Royal Over-Seas League: Stephen Ridgwell 'Some land the Law calls mine: Kipling and the Edwardian Countryside'

Wednesday 10 July 2019. 4.30pm in the Evelyn Wrench Room, Royal Over-Seas League: Kipling Society Annual General Meeting. 5.30 for 6pm: Dr Jarad Zimble (University of Birmingham), title TBC.

Wednesday 11 September. 5.30 for 6 pm in the Evelyn Wrench Room, Royal Over-Seas League. Speaker and title TBC

Wednesday 13 November. 5.30 for 6 pm in the Mountbatten Room, Royal Over-Seas League. Speaker and title TBC

Note: The rooms in which the meetings are to be held may change.

SECRETS OF THE NATIONAL TRUST

Filming with Baroness Joan Bakewell took place at *Bateman's* in December. Sadly, there was no time for anyone from the Society to be interviewed. Expect the episode to be aired later this year.

KIPLING STATUE IN BURWASH

Poor Rudyard has been patiently sitting on his bench inside a wooden box on Burwash High Street since November. Burwash Parish Council have not been able to rearrange a celebrity unveiling in the near future, so intend to expose the statue to the gaze of the world with little ceremony in the next couple of weeks.

However, they do plan to hold a Kipling Day in the summer to celebrate the statue in warmer weather. They've asked the Kipling Society to participate and we will be discussing with them how we can help (e.g. by holding Kipling readings in the village or at *Bateman's*). Ideas welcome as to how else we might be able to contribute.

MOWGLI

Some of you may by now have seen Andy Serkis's film, which opened on Netflix and selected cinemas in December. It seems to have been well received by the critics and I found it entertaining and certainly truer to the world Kipling's created than either of the Disney offerings. However, to my mind too many extraneous plotlines were introduced, including a white hunter in place of old Buldeo and Mowgli having to pass physical test to be allowed to hunt with the pack.

Why, I wonder, did Shere Khan need to be killed in a fight rather than by Mowgli's cunning? And how jarring it was to hear Akela pronounced **Akeela**, ignoring both a century of Cub Scout practice and Kipling's own pronunciation guide.

I'd be happy to give space to other members' views of the film in the next Newsletter.

THE NEW READERS' GUIDE – Update from John Radcliffe

Now that we have completed notes on all the published prose and verse we are reviewing what the NRG has to offer, and how it can be developed further.

Some of the later verse, written after the Great War, when Kipling was less active as a public figure, is particularly interesting:

- In www.kiplingsociety.co.uk/poems_lollius.htm "Lollius" (1920) he attacks the political corruption of the day, when honours could be bought and sold.
- In www.kiplingsociety.co.uk/poems_stormcone.htm "The Storm Cone" (1932) he warns of the perils England faces.
- In www.kiplingsociety.co.uk/poems_chartres.htm "Chartres Windows" (1925), inspired by the evening light through the splendid stained glass, he reflects on his life, and his art.

In exploring the verse you may find it useful to look at our lists, collection by collection, which can be found via www.kiplingsociety.co.uk/bookmart_works.htm "The main works" in the NRG sidebar. A challenging future job will be to create a www.kiplingsociety.co.uk/rg_index.htm 'themes database' for the verse, as we have done for the tales. There are also, of course, many unpublished poems and many little-known articles still to be included in the Guide, as Thomas Pinney has shown in his *Poems of Rudyard Kipling* (2013) and *The Cause of Humanity and Other Stories*. (2018).

BATEMAN'S AT CHRISTMAS

Bateman's was decorated this year by a team of NT volunteers. Each of the main rooms downstairs had a 'Just So Stories' theme.



Dining Room (How the Rhinoceros got his Skin)



Hall ('The Elephant's Child')



Parlour (How the Whale got his Throat) – the tree decorations were hand-made



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