

NORMAN NICHOLSON SOCIETY SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY ANNUAL REPORT 2025

This year has been a successful one in terms of liaising with a range of different schools and community groups on behalf of the society. In the Autumn Term I was able to work with Haverigg Primary School and Wordsworth Grasmere when they carried out a series of literary based activities both in Haverigg and at Grasmere. The purpose of my involvement was to gain experience of integrating poetry into literary based activities which could then be developed for the Nature Zone at Haverigg Primary School. This is an area of woodland on the school field which is being developed as a learning resource for other local schools to come and visit.

Nicholson's poetry will be incorporated into any developing ideas and teaching resources will be made available to any visiting schools.

The annual Christmas Tree Festival was held again at St George's church and was even more popular than previous years raising over £1500 for local charities. The poem we chose to illustrate was 'The Shepherds' Carol', one we haven't used previously, and it was good to be able to re-use the shepherds made by Peggy Troll, our former committee member and cofounder of the society. The winter scene of the shepherds, their sheepdogs and a few Herdwick sheep nestled under a drystone wall gained positive feedback.

The MA students from the University of Cumbria visited again in March in order to explore something of NN's 'lived in' experience of Millom, the town, the people and the landscape. We were able to visit Nicholson's former home which is currently undergoing refurbishment on the outside of the building and experienced the attic room without a window as the new one was waiting to be fitted later that same day. The weather was glorious and in the afternoon we enjoyed NN's poetry at various locations on the Hodbarrow Nature Reserve and also on the beach.

The NN Memorial Fund continues to operate with the Millom Town Clerk following up any adjustments required to take into account the recent changes in local authority boundaries.

The Millom Heritage & Arts Centre is currently relocating the Poetry Room which contains NN artifacts and resources. The Centre remains closed while the work is undertaken. I have made a request to attend a meeting of the Trustees to discuss the recent changes and also to update them on the development of the NN House Project and ways in which we could collaborate in the future but I am still waiting a reply.

At a recent NNS committee meeting we discussed the idea of a project based on NN's 'Stitch and Stone' book. This book combines NN's poems and embroidered pictures by Kenneth Dow Barker and was first published in 1975. I have contacted the local Craft Group to discuss their thoughts about being involved and they gave me very positive feedback and hoped to be involved in the future.

The Nicholson Memorial Window was officially opened in July 2000 which is 25 years ago this year. Commemorating this with local schools would be a worthwhile idea to develop in the Summer Term.

Sue Dawson. Schools & Community Liaison Officer