



**Newsletter
of the
Monasterevin
Hopkins
Society**



opkins' Anvil

Issue No 1/22 – Summer 2022



Moore Abbey

Photo:

Andreas F. Borchert

Monasterevin Hopkins Society Annual Festival 2022



**Gerard Manley
Hopkins**

Fri, 29 July, 2022

Venue: Monasterevin Community Centre, Main Street, Monasterevin

4.00 pm **Opening of the Artists for Peace Art Exhibition**
Curator: Sister Ann Scully RSM

Venue: Moore Abbey, Baronial Hall, Monasterevin

8.00 pm **Concert: Aaron Doyle, Tenor, accompanied by Donal Hennessy**

Sat, 30 July, 2022

Venue: Monasterevin Community Centre, Main Street, Monasterevin

11.00 am **Lecture: Dan Carmody**
Topic: Should Hopkins have come to Ireland?

12.00 noon **Lecture: Richard O'Rourke**
Topic: Hopkins, Punchestown and the Poisoning of the Hounds

1:00-2.30 pm **Lunch Break**

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Venue: Monasterevin Community Centre, Main Street, Monasterevin

2.30 pm **Poetry Reading: Anni Wilton-Jones**
Dedicated to Lance Pierson RIP

3.00 pm **My Favourite Hopkins Poem**
All those who wish to do so are invited to read a Hopkins poem of their choice.

All day **Artists for Peace Art Exhibition**

Sun, 31 July, 2022

Venue: Monasterevin Community Centre, Main Street, Monasterevin

All or part day **Artists for Peace Art Exhibition (closing time to be decided)**

See more information on pages 7 and 10-13
Details will soon be available online at monasterevinhopkinssociety.org



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Note re sources for Hopkins' poems reproduced in Hopkins' Anvil

Where differences exist between the versions shown as sources, the version given in *Gerard Manley Hopkins, The Major Works*, Ed. Catherine Phillips, published in 2002/reissued in 2009 by Oxford University Press, has been used, unless otherwise stated. For online sources referred to, these are current at the time of publication of the Anvil issue.



Editorial by Anni (Áine) Wilton-Jones



After a year with no Monasterevin Hopkins Society Festival and another year with an abbreviated online one, it is good to be able to tell you about this year's full-length live event!

As the initial planning took place when it was unsure whether travel and other arrangements might still be problematic, it was decided to concentrate on expertise from within the Society and from the local area. I think you will agree, though, that this is in no way a compromise as regards quality and interest!

The concert features the very talented tenor, Aaron Doyle, of whom Monasterevin is justifiably proud, and the speakers, Dan Carmody and Richard O'Rourke are knowledgeable and have chosen subjects which are anything but pedestrian. You can find out the details within this issue of the Anvil. We hope many of you will be able to join us in Monasterevin for the Festival weekend.

If you can't be there for the Festival, though, this copy of the Hopkins' Anvil has other items of interest. There are four of Hopkins' poems, recommended by members of the Society's committee, along with the reasons for the choices. What will you feel about these poems? What would your own choice have been? We would be interested to hear from you.

I hope you will enjoy this issue of Hopkins' Anvil and pass it on to your friends, too. They can get their own copy sent to them in future by emailing me and asking to be added to the circulation list. Contact details are on the back cover.

[If you are new to the work of Hopkins or if you do not know about his connection with Monasterevin you may like to read *A brief introduction to Gerard Manley Hopkins, SJ, and his connection with Monasterevin*, p21.]

Submission details

Whether you are new to Hopkins' work or very knowledgeable on the subject, you are invited to send your comments and items to be considered for inclusion in Hopkins' Anvil. Ideally, your submission should be sent by email, either in the body of the email or as a Word, LibreOffice or OpenOffice attachment, so that the text can be easily transferred to another document. Please do not send in PDF format. Please see the back cover for contact details.



The Challenge

The Editor challenged members of the Monasterevin Hopkins Society committee to choose one of Hopkins poems, which they would recommend everyone to read, and to write a brief (or longer) explanation why they made that choice.

Four members took up the challenge – including the Editor herself, who had promised she would not shirk meeting her own challenge. Within this issue of Hopkins' Anvil you will discover the poems they chose and why. You may also get to know a bit more about the people working to bring the festival to you.

Wayne Harrington, Chairman



The Monasterevin Hopkins Society welcomed a new Chairman at the 2021 AGM. Wayne Harrington is well known to people in the Monasterevin area as he teaches at the local St Paul's Secondary School, holding the position of Year Head for Transition Year.

Choosing a Hopkins poem to recommend was not just an exercise for Wayne; it is something that he actually does as part of his work!

Wayne's poem recommendation

My favourite Hopkins poem is *Pied Beauty*. God is praised for creating great diversity in the world and the fragmented syntax and plosive sounds evoke thoughts of a release of sorts for me. I love the phrase 'dappled things' as it suggests a hidden or obscured beauty, perhaps not visible to all. It makes me think of under-appreciated or under-valued things that have not been truly seen. I think it is a very relevant poem for the youth of today and I enjoy teaching it to my students.



Pied Beauty *by Gerard Manley Hopkins*

Glory be to God for dappled things —
For skies of couple-colour as a brinded cow;
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
Landscape plotted and pieced — fold, fallow, and plough;
And áll trades, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spáre, strange;
Whatever is fickle, frecklèd (who knows how?)
With swift, slów; sweet, sóur; adázzele, díim;
He fathers-forth whose beauty is pást change:
Práise him.

Sources: *Poetry Foundation* (at poetryfoundation.org) and *Gerard Manley Hopkins, The Major Works*, Ed. Catherine Phillips, Oxford University Press.



Pied Wagtails



Moore Abbey – Photograph by Andreas F, Borchert

Venue for Concert

Festival News

The Monasterevin Hopkins Society is very much looking forward to welcoming you to this year's Annual Monasterevin Hopkins Festival, which will take place on Friday, 29 July, to Sunday, 31 July, 2022, and will be a live event. It is a great pleasure to be able to announce this, after the 2020 Festival had to be cancelled and the 2021 Festival was a single-day online event.

Most events this year take place in Monasterevin Community Centre, a former RIC Barracks. The concert will be held, as usual, in the Baronial Hall in stately Moore Abbey. The piano that will be used by the accompanist is the one that belonged to John Count McCormack. There is a lot of history in these places, for those with an interest in local heritage, and the same applies to Monasterevin itself and the area around.

Monasterevin is a beautiful small town of great antiquity. There is evidence of Neolithic occupation in the area and remains of fortified settlements date back to the Bronze Age. The St Evin who founded a monastic settlement, as reflected in the town's name, was a contemporary of St Patrick.

The town that stands today was mainly built between 1790 and 1860 though the present Moore Abbey was built a little earlier, in 1765-70, and incorporates the fabric of previous buildings from c 1150 and c 1650. The town contains lovely Georgian houses and boasts both the Barrowline from the Grand Canal and the Barrow River. Monasterevin has been called the Venice of Ireland because of all its bridges. Sights worth seeing are, for example, the Lifting Bridge and the Bell Harbour, with its flock of water-birds.



Irene Kyffin, Vice Chair



Irene Kyffin is a keen attendee at MHS Festivals, at which she has previously delivered papers, but is not able to attend this year because of family commitments. She will be missed.

Of Irish-Jewish descent, Irene moved from Dublin to London when she was 20. In her 40's, she took a degree for the teaching of Drama and followed this with a Masters in Social Anthropology. Irene has taught in Secondary and Primary school, interspersed with University, ending her full-time teaching career in Further Education. There, she trained in Dyslexia, worked in this area for fourteen years and ran tutor workshops.

Irene created a programme of jazz/poetry fusion with the great jazz pianist Stan Tracey on the work of Gerard Manley Hopkins, which she presented at many Literary Festivals around the UK.

Irene has written papers and given talks on Hopkins over a number of years in the United States and Ireland, doing readings as well. In Denver, Colorado, where Irene was delivering academic papers, she ran Shakespeare workshops and taught English and American Literature. Irene worked with the Latin-American jazz saxophonist, Carlos Chavez.

She has also had some of her own poems published in the prestigious *Live Encounters* online poetry magazine (liveencounters.net)

(Visit Irene's website at art-science.com/IK to hear Irene and Stan performing Hopkins' Spelt from Sybil's leaves and other pieces. This particular poem is one of the 'terrible sonnets' and, whilst it is not one of his readily-accessible works, it's sonorous alliterative nature makes it wonderful to hear read. However, Irene and Stan took it into new realms.)

Irene's poem recommendation

Unlike many of Hopkins' poems, *Spring and Fall* makes itself available to any reader. It's expression of a child, with fresh thoughts, unaware of the consequences of life's end, touches us all. We can all remember that simplicity and joyousness. Its ending is a sadness we all live with.



Spring and Fall *by* Gerard Manley Hopkins

Márgarét, áre you gríeving
Over Goldengrove unleaving?
Leáves, líke the things of man, you
With your fresh thoughts care for, can you?
Áh! ás the heart grows older
It will come to such sights colder
By and by, nor spare a sigh
Though worlds of wanwood leafmeal lie;
And yet you will weep and know why.
Now no matter, child, the name:
Sórrów's spríngs áre the same.
Nor mouth had, no nor mind, expressed
What heart heard of, ghost guessed:
It is the blight man was born for
It is Margaret you mourn for.

Sources: *Poetry Foundation* (at poetryfoundation.org) and *Gerard Manley Hopkins, The Major Works*, Ed. Catherine Phillips, Oxford University Press.




Shades of Autumn



Festival Pages

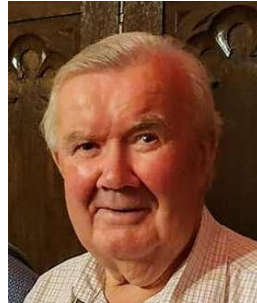
Registration	
People coming to the Festival may register on arrival on Friday, 29 July, or Saturday, 30 July.	
Charges	
Fri, 29 July, Concert	€20
Sat, 30 July, Two Morning Lectures & Two Afternoon Poetry Events	€20
Fri, 29 July, and Sat. 30 July, Full Festival	€40
Fri, 29 – Sun, 31 July, Art Exhibition	Free

Performer
<p>Aaron Doyle</p> 
<p>Aaron Doyle is a Tenor who hails from Monasterevin Co. Kildare. He is well known for his performances as a principal lead vocalist with the internationally acclaimed show <i>Dúlamán – Voice of the Celts</i>.</p> <p>Aaron began his musical studies as a junior chorister in St Peter's Boys School choir under the directorship of Mr John Proctor and vocal coach Mrs Elizabeth Cleary. He then furthered his musical studies with Mrs Berna Hayden in Herbert Lodge School of Music. He attended Clongowes Wood College, as a recipient of The Alberto Hurtado Scholarship programme. During his time in Clongowes, Aaron was a distinguished principal vocalist of both the Clongowes Wood College Senior choir and the Schola Cantorum. He then studied Vocal Studies in The Royal Irish Academy of Music, under the tutelage of Dr Veronica Dunne and répétiteur Dr Dearbhla Collins.</p> <p>Aaron is making a very welcome return to the Monasterevin Hopkins Society Festival Concert, having been very much appreciated as the guest performer at the 2018 festival. He will, again, be singing a varied programme, including classical, modern and Irish traditional songs. This year, he will be accompanied by Donal Hennessy.</p>



Speaker

Dan Carmody



In this talk, Dan will explore both the experiences of Hopkins in Ireland and Hopkins' attitude to the Irish, through an examination of Hopkins' correspondence.

Dan is the Secretary of the Monasterevin Hopkins Society.

Speaker

Richard O'Rourke



In a letter to R. W. Dixon, dated Dec. 22, 1887, written at University College, St. Stephens Green, Dublin, Hopkins writes: ' ...Tomorrow I am going down to my friends in Monasterevan in Co. Kildare, the scene of many misadventures ...and now of the poisoning of the hounds, which threatens to put an end altogether to hunting in all that neighbourhood and with it to Punchestown races – what would mean on the whole the withdrawal of a great deal of money from the country'.

Richard will give a talk on the background to the events to which Hopkins refers.

Richard is a retired pharmacist who has lived in Monasterevin since 1972. He is a former Chairman and Treasurer of the Gerard Manley Hopkins Society and Chairman of the Monasterevin Hopkins Society(MHS). He is currently Honorary Vice President of the MHS.



Art Exhibition Curator

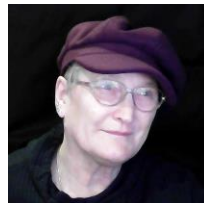
Ann Scully RSM



Sister Ann Scully, of the Mercy Convent in Monasterevin, is the figure behind the Artists for Peace Art Exhibitions, held in association with the Monasterevin Hopkins Society. As in previous years, Sister Ann has arranged an exhibition of a wide range of art-works by artists from the Monasterevin area and beyond.

Poetry Reading

Anni Wilton-Jones



Anni Wilton-Jones, from Wales but now living in Ireland, was on the *Writers of Wales* list and a member of *Salem*, a five-poet performing group. She has read in Ireland, UK and USA. Her publications include *Bridges*, *Winter Whiting*, several chapbooks and journalistic articles.

Her poetry covers a wide range of issues – domestic, demanding, intimate and international. Her keen interest in photography, both of nature and of *Urbex and *Rurex subjects, is also reflected in her poetry and, in particular, in some of the work that she will be reading. Some examples of her poetry are in Live Encounters Poetry & Writing Volume Two December 2021 at liveencounters.net

* the exploration of manmade structures, usually abandoned ruins [Urbex (urban) and Rurex (rural)]

Overwhelmed
(forestry round an
abandoned farm)





Art Exhibitions and Monasterevin Hopkins Society Festivals

The Artists for Peace Art Exhibitions are very popular with Festival attendees and with local residents. The range of work is extensive and there is something to appeal to everyone. The open air option that had to be adopted during the restrictions was very successful and is well worth repeating but, being dependent on good weather, is somewhat risky as a regular choice! Mercy Convent has been a very good venue and this year's venue, the Monasterevin Community Centre, is also a popular venue for a range of local events.

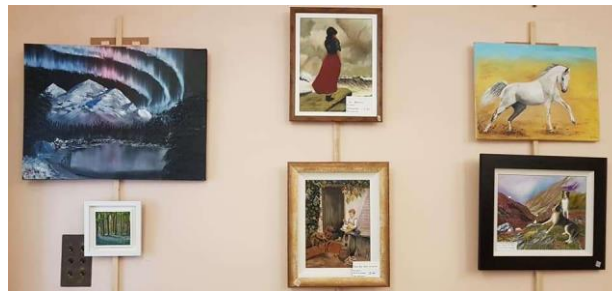


Mercy Convent
Drogheda St



Monasterevin Community Centre
Main Street

These photographs from exhibitions in previous years give an idea of what there is to expect during this year's Festival.





Richard O'Rourke, Honorary Vice President



Richard O'Rourke is one of the speakers at this year's Festival and his biographical information appears in the Festival Pages of this issue.

Richard's poem recommendation

Felix Randal by G M Hopkins. I live in County Kildare where horse racing and rearing is part of the fabric of life. Nearly all of my local friends and acquaintances know someone associated with the horse industry, if they are not themselves in the industry. They would all be familiar with the shoeing of horses as a job requiring skill and strength plus a temperament that allows them to work with animals of a very often skittish and nervous disposition.

So, a poem about a farrier would have special meaning for people in Kildare. While the poem may not be known widely, I have seen it quoted on the Memory Cards of two of my acquaintances in the local area. Memory Cards are cards produced by families after the death of a member to commemorate the departed, for distribution to relations and friends.

In my childhood on my way home from school, I and my school pals would often make the short detour to look in on our local farrier or as we called him – Peter Farrell, The Blacksmith, in his forge. He was also 'big-boned and hardy handsome'. The forge seemed to be always busy with a number of men about, all involved in lively conversation and yet pleased to see us youngsters call to gaze and wonder at all the goings-on and have a 'go' at the big black bellows. Peter was well used to children calling, having been sent by their parents for 'The Cure' for warts on their hands or fingers which were 'cured' by putting your hand or finger in the water used by Peter for tempering the hot metal.

Of course in my youth I wasn't familiar with Hopkins' poem but some 25 years ago or so I recall that during our Hopkins Festival an English tourist, on seeing our large poster advertising the event, called in to our Festival and unburdened himself of the information that his great-granduncle was in fact the subject of this Hopkins poem. Unfortunately, he was in such a hurry onwards that we failed to secure his contact details for a follow-up conversation.

This Hopkins poem is probably one of his more accessible and personal. It very quickly tells us of the experience of a priest who tended to a big strong farrier who died from what seems very like cancer. He touches on his charge's loss of weight and loss of mental function, his refusal to accept that he was dying at first and his subsequent acceptance.

He shows a deep understanding of the effect of sickness on a sufferer, 'sickness broke him', and how Felix at first fights against it mentally but later accepted it after being anointed and after his words of a heavenlier nature began and had given some comfort, 'My tongue had taught thee comfort, touch had quenched thy tears'. He mentions how a fondness developed between them for each other and the effectiveness of touch in conveying love and care.

The effect on Hopkins himself is well borne out when he says 'this seeing the sick endears them to us, us too it endears ...thy tears that touched my heart'. Hopkins kind words 'Ah well God rest him all road ever he offended' and 'Felix, poor Felix Randal' indicate his feelings for Felix. And Hopkins asks at the end 'how far from your thoughts was all this suffering when you made shoes for 'the great grey drayhorse'.



Felix Randal *by* Gerard Manley Hopkins

Felix Randal the farrier, O is he dead then? my duty all ended,
Who have watched his mould of man, big-boned and hardy-handsome
Pining, pining, till time when reason rambled in it, and some
Fatal four disorders, fleshed there, all contended?

Sickness broke him. Impatient, he cursed at first, but mended
Being anointed and all; though a heavenlier heart began some
Months earlier, since I had our sweet reprieve and ransom
Tendered to him. Ah well, God rest him all road ever he offended!

This seeing the sick endears them to us, us too it endears.
My tongue had taught thee comfort, touch had quenched thy tears,
Thy tears that touched my heart, child, Felix, poor Felix Randal;

How far from then forethought of, all thy more boisterous years,
When thou at the random grim forge, powerful amidst peers,
Didst fettle for the great grey drayhorse his bright and battering sandal!

Sources: *Poetry Foundation* (at poetryfoundation.org) and *Gerard Manley Hopkins, The Major Works*, Ed. Catherine Phillips, Oxford University Press.



The Old Forge Window



News and views

This is the section which covers matters local, national and international, that may be of interest to readers of the Anvil and also includes items provided by readers themselves. This time the news is sad, being about the death of someone much involved in the promotion of Hopkins' work.



Obituary

Lance Pierson RIP

Lance Pierson (1947 – 2021) was an actor and professional poetry performer. He died at home in Fulham in London on 14 October, 2021, after being diagnosed with cancer in July, 2021.

Lance Pierson specialised in poetry performance, with particular emphasis on Gerard Manley Hopkins, John Milton and John Betjeman. He was on the steering group of the UK Hopkins Society and some of you may remember that he came to the Monasterevin Hopkins Society Festival in 2019, at which he read.

He was also Chairman of the UK's Betjeman Society and a full obituary is available on the society's website (<https://www.betjemansociety.com/2022/02/24/lance-pierson/>). This provides a great deal of information about the many ways in which he gave of himself to others. Leila Abu-Sharr, a member of the Hammersmith and Fulham Poetry Enjoyment Group, which he founded, is quoted in the obituary as saying: 'It was never about him, but about whom he was able to delight. He brought pleasure, humour and warm hearted kindness to so many'.

In recognition of Lance's long-term commitment to encouraging interest in Hopkins' works, Anni Wilton-Jones is dedicating her poetry reading at the Monasterevin Hopkins Society Festival 2022 to his memory.



Lance Pierson (right) and James Harper during the 2019 Monasterevin Hopkins Society Festival



Anni Wilton-Jones, Public Relations Officer



Anni Wilton-Jones is reading her poetry at this year's Festival and her biographical information appears in the Festival Pages of this issue.

Anni's poem recommendation

I promised that I wouldn't shirk meeting my own challenge, too. The criteria I set myself were that the poem I chose should be one that would be a good lead-in to Hopkins' work, for those new to it. However, the poem might be less well-known to those more versed in his more complex ones and would, in my view, be worth their while to read or reread.

Winter with the Gulf Stream fell well within the guidelines I had set. The newcomer to Hopkins may be heard to say 'He's so hard to understand', 'I don't get all that sprung rhythm stuff' or 'All those funny marks put me off'. This poem, however, does not require diacritical marks to enable the reader to work out how to read it. It is not in sprung rhythm and flows easily – slight hiccups on a first reading, perhaps, but easy to correct once you try it again!

Hard to understand? Yes, that is true of some of Hopkins' work and it is why a poem like *Winter with the Gulf Stream*, is a good starting point. Without being boring or banal, it is easy to understand. A couple of minor points that are easily found on the Internet are that hyaline is 'substance with a glassy appearance and that is transparent or nearly so' and that Pactolus is the name of the river in which King Midas got rid of his 'golden touch' by washing himself. 'The bugle moon' – in the earlier published version the wording is 'The moon, half-orb'd' – presumably refers to the shape of the half-moon bugle but a bugle, as well as being a musical instrument, is 'a small cylindrical bead of glass or plastic'. Both of these meanings chime with the poem.

Over-all, the poem is about the beauty of winter and shows Hopkins' joy in it. *Pied Beauty* (see the copy earlier in this issue and Wayne Harrington's commentary) also talks of beauty but *Winter with the Gulf Stream* is different in that it does not ignore the ugliness, which is also there.

The clogged brook runs with choking sound,

*Kneading the mounded mire that stops
His channel under clammy coats
Of foliage fallen in the copse.*

Instead, it places that ugliness as a framework for the sunset and other delights, enhancing them by the contrast.



The bugle moon...

*I never saw her so divine.
But through black branches...*

Young as he was when the poem was written – it was published in the year that he was nineteen and that he went up to Balliol – Hopkins' observation was already acute and his language wonderfully expressed, the allusions being unusual but apposite. Eight years later, he was able to make the poem even better, in my opinion. Amongst my favourite lines are:

The hoarse leaves crawl on hissing ground

Where yonder crimson fireball sets.

For readers, this poem has so much to offer. However, it has an additional message for writers – strive for excellence. Writing a poem requires work. The first try is a draft which will rarely be the best it could be. It will need to be honed – a word changed here, another there, the whole piece tied together, with no wasted words and no drifting from the subject. Publication itself is not necessarily a sign of perfection; be prepared, even then, to rework and improve on a piece.



Moon and Frosted Branches



Winter with the Gulf Stream *by* Gerard Manley Hopkins

The boughs, the boughs are bare enough,
But earth has not yet felt the snow.
Frost-fringed our ivies are, and rough

With spiked rime the brambles show,
The hoarse leaves crawl on hissing ground,
What time the sighing wind is low.

But if the rain-blasts be unbound,
And from dank feathers wring the drops,
The clogg'd brook runs with choking sound,

Kneading the mounded mire that stops
His channel under clammy coats
Of foliage fallen in the copse.

A single passage of weak notes
Is all the winter bird dare try.
The moon, half-orb'd, ere sunset floats

So glassy-white about the sky,
So like a berg of hyaline,
Pencil'd with blue so daintily—

I never saw her so divine.
But thro' black branches—rarely drest
In streaming scarfs that smoothly shine,

Shot o'er with lights—the emblazon'd west,
Where yonder crimson fire-ball sets,
Trails forth a purfled-silken vest.

Long beds I see of violets
In beryl lakes which they reef o'er:
A Pactolean river frets

Against its tawny-golden shore:
All ways the molten colours run:
Till, sinking ever more and more

Into an azure mist, the sun
Drops down engulf'd, his journey done.

Version first published in *Once a Week* VIII,
no. 190 (14, February, 1863), available
online.

The boughs, the boughs are bare enough,
But earth has not yet felt the snow.
Frost-furred our ivies are and rough

With bills of rime the brambles shew,
The hoarse leaves crawl on hissing ground,
Because the sighing wind is low.

But if the rain-blasts be unbound,
And from dank feathers wring the drops,
The clogged brook runs with choking sound,

Kneading the mounded mire that stops
His channel under clammy coats
Of foliage fallen in the copse.

A simple passage of weak notes
Is all the winter bird dare try.
The bugle moon by daylight floats

So glassy white about the sky,
So like a berg of hyaline,
And pencilled blue so daintily,

I never saw her so divine.
But through black branches, rarely drest
In scarves of silky shot and shine,

The webbed and the watery west,
Where yonder crimson fireball sets,
Looks laid for feasting and for rest.

I see long reefs of violets
In beryl-covered fens so dim,
A gold-water Pactolus frets

In brindled wharves and yellow brim,
The waxen colours weep and run,
And slendering to his burning rim

Into the flat blue mist the sun
Drops out and all our day is done..

Gerard Manley Hopkins, The Major Works,
Ed. Catherine Phillips, Oxford University
Press. The text is from a transcription by Fr. F.
E. Bacon, SJ, of a revised version of August
1871, the original of which is now lost.



A final word on the challenge

When I set my challenge to the committee of the Monasterevin Hopkins Society, I asked for those who took it up to name a poem by Hopkins that they would recommend everyone to read – not necessarily their own particular favourite – along with providing a paragraph, or more if they wished, giving the reasons why they made that choice.

I was hoping the choices would provide variety in the types of poems, the subject matter, the reasons given and the amount of detail so that there might be something to suit every reader. I have not been disappointed. The works chosen by the three committee members who took up the challenge are very good examples of Hopkins poetry, with varied content, all in sprung rhythm and skilfully-worked. The given reasons, whether short and snappy or in greater depth, are illuminating. I would add my encouragement to those of the selectors, as regards the benefits of reading these poems. My own choice has added to the variety so you have been given four recommendations for Hopkins poems for everyone to read.

Had I asked 'What is your favourite Hopkins' poem', would the answers have been different? Well, in Wayne's case, no, apparently not. He has chosen to recommend his favourite poem. However, how about Irene and Richard or me, for that matter? Perhaps we might find out during 'My Favourite Hopkins' Poem', the final session of the Monasterevin Hopkins Society Festival 2022.

Perhaps you might like to read your favourite in that session – all volunteers are encouraged to do so but there is no pressure! You can just come to enjoy other people's readings, if you prefer.



Monasterevin House

The home of the Cassidy sisters, where Hopkins stayed and where a number of Festival events have taken place.

Monasterevin Hopkins Society Committee

Honorary President: Rev. Denis O'Sullivan, P.E.

Honorary Vice Presidents: Dr Norman White, Noel Maher, Richard O'Rourke

Chairman: Wayne Harrington,

Vice Chair: Irene Kyffin

Secretary: Dan Carmody

Treasurers: Ambrose Sharpe, Paschal O'Brien

P.R.O.: Áine (Anni) Wilton-Jones

Members: Sr Ann Scully, Mary Carmody

A brief introduction to Gerard Manley Hopkins, SJ, and his connection with Monasterevin

Gerard Manley Hopkins, SJ, lived from 28 July 1844 to 8 June 1889. He was an English poet, a Roman Catholic convert and a Jesuit priest, whose posthumous fame established him among the leading Victorian poets. His experimental explorations in prosody (i.e. the patterns of rhythm and sound used in poetry), especially sprung rhythm, and his use of imagery established him as a daring innovator in a period of largely traditional verse.

Hopkins in Monasterevin

Hopkins moved to Dublin in 1884 and died there in 1889. During this time he was a professor of Greek and Latin at University College Dublin. In letters to his mother and friend, English Poet Laureate Robert Bridges, he fondly mentions taking six or seven short breaks at Monasterevin House with the Cassidy sisters, commencing in 1886. The Cassidy family were wealthy Catholic whiskey distillers.

Monasterevin Celebrating Hopkins

Monasterevin has been celebrating the Hopkins' association since 1988, when a module on Hopkins was included in the Monasterevin Canal Festival. The Monasterevin community has supported and organised the Annual Monasterevin Hopkins Festival every year since, under the aegis of a number of community organisations. Since 2010, the Annual Hopkins Festival has been organised by the Monasterevin Hopkins Society.

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The Monasterevin Hopkins Society organises an Annual Monasterevin Hopkins Festival, a celebration of Hopkins, his poetry and his connection with Monasterevin. The programme consists of poetry, literature, lectures and music and aims to educate and stimulate the community.

For more information about the Monasterevin Hopkins Society and the Annual Monasterevin Hopkins Festival, visit monasterevinhopkinssociety.org.

You can also contact the society direct for information or to discuss delivering a paper or talk at a festival. Contact details are as follows:

Email:
info@monasterevinhopkinssociety.org