



Sea Fever 3: A Nelson Extravaganza

Press Release 16 August 2019

Following the success of the second SEA FEVER festival in May 2019, we're delighted to announce a new venture in the form of an autumn festival. Sea Fever 3 will focus on the life and times of our local hero, Horatio Nelson. It'll be staged at Wells Maltings, Wells-next-the-Sea on Friday, October 18.

SEA FEVER, North Norfolk's festival of poetry and prose, is the successor to the long-established *Poetry-next-the-Sea*. This May we welcomed to the Maltings authors and poets including Julia Blackburn, Roger Law, Kevin Crossley-Holland and Sir Andrew Motion. Now we are opening a new chapter of the festival by using the proximity of Trafalgar Day (October 21) to celebrate the man dubbed by Byron, 'Britannia's God of War'. Nelson was of course born and bred on the coast, learned to sail here, was raised to the Peerage and styled Baron Nelson of the Nile and Burnham Thorpe in the aftermath of his great 1798 Mediterranean victory, and declared 'I am a Norfolk Man and Glory in being so.' Norfolk is Nelson County.

We are hugely fortunate in having induced two distinguished naval historians to talk about different aspects of Nelson. Andrew Lambert is Laughton Professor of Naval History in the Department of War Studies, Kings College London, author of numerous works of naval history including: *Nelson: Britannia's God of War*. Rear-Admiral Dr Chris Parry is a decorated veteran of the Falklands War and several other operational and combat tours, has a Masters degree in Modern History from Oxford, and a doctorate in the Psychology of Command; his books include *Super Highway: Sea Power in the 21st Century*.

We will also be paying tribute to another local hero, the late Tom Pocock, the journalist, biographer and naval historian who did so much to revive interest in Nelson in the years after the Second World War; and raising the curtain on an

exhibition at the Maltings itself of Nelson memorabilia by way of a talk by the distinguished economist and longstanding Wells resident, Ian Scott.

Nelson of course also provided inspiration for the two great novelists of the Napoleonic Wars at sea: CS Forester (creator of Horatio Hornblower) and Patrick O'Brian, who wrote the rival Jack Aubrey/Stephen Maturin series. Each sequence has its adherents. To help members of the festival audience hone their own views we'll be staging a debate. Competing teams will put the case for each of these iconic writers. The *New York Times* declared of O'Brian, 'His Aubrey-Maturin series, 20 novels of the Royal Navy in the Napoleonic Wars, is a masterpiece. It will outlive most of today's putative literary gems as Sherlock Holmes has outlived Bulwer-Lytton, as Mark Twain has outlived Charles Reade.' Winston Churchill was Forester's greatest fan. 'I find Hornblower admirable, vastly entertaining.' Which view will prevail?

Finally, but decidedly not least, we'll be saluting our roots in *Poetry next-the Sea* with two special poetry events. A schools' poetry recital competition to be judged by a panel led by Kevin Crossley-Holland (who needs no introduction here); and a special presentation of one of the best loved poems in the language - and one which just happens to have been published in the year of Nelson's victory at the Nile. Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*.

Jim Ring and David Waller, Festival Directors

Tickets for the festival will be on sale through Wells Maltings: to Friends and Patrons on 01328 710885

In person: visitor information office, Wells Maltings, Staithe Street NR23 1AN

Online: www.wellsmaltings.org.uk

Notes:

SEA FEVER 3, North Norfolk's Festival of Poetry + Prose, will be celebrated on Friday 18th October. All events will take place in the Wells Maltings: Wells Maltings, Staithe Street, Wells-next-the-Sea, Norfolk, NR23 1AU

Full details of the programme and the speakers will be available on our website in September: www.seafeverliteraryfestival.com .

For further details contact Claire Dowley and Jim Ring at info@seafeverliteraryfestival.com