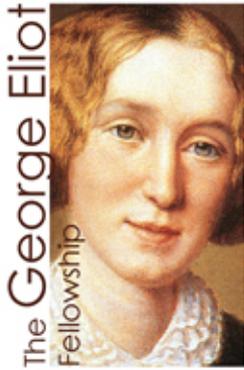


George Eliot Fellowship

Newsletter

October 2020 supplement



View from the Chair

I am sorry if this reminds you of the adage that you wait for hours for a bus and then three turn up at once. Two Fellowship Newsletters in ten days is certainly unusual but of course because we can send them so easily as Word documents or PDFs then the temptation is always there.

But the truth is that the pandemic is up to its tricks again and we have had to make drastic changes to our proposed programme of events for the rest of this year. We will use Zoom on Saturday for the first time so that Gail Marshall's lecture can go ahead. Because we have also had to cancel Valerie Fehlbaum's event and the Annual Luncheon is in jeopardy we are making Gail Marshall's event FREE to members as recompense for a depleted year.

49th Annual Lecture – Sat 10 Oct at 2.30 via zoom

This is to be the very first online lecture for the Fellowship. It is fitting that it should be for our Annual Lecture, and even more fitting that it should be delivered by Professor Gail Marshall.

Gail will speak about George Eliot and networks, with the GEF alluded to as being a form of network of readers. She is intrigued by how the Victorians used 'networks' in different ways to us, and would love the chance and excuse to pursue this further in her presentation.



Professor Gail Marshall

If you wish to be part of this event please email gef1930@gmail.com

You will then be issued with an invitation and a password and a meeting ID in a return email.

There is information on the Zoom website if you need to investigate further. Our subscription allows up to 100 participants and unlimited time. If you have paid already your money will be refunded.

Please ignore the earlier Newsletter. This is now a free event for members only. Email/phone if you are uncertain. This is a first for us so there may be glitches – but we are rehearsing!

Valerie Fehlbaum Introduces Chrissey Evans – Sat 24 Oct at 2.30 - Postponed

This was to have been a wonderful way of discovering more about George Eliot and her beloved sister Chrissey and we know how excited Valerie was to be performing it. But the second bout of Covid19 has struck and over last weekend and with much heartache Valerie and the GEF agreed to postpone her event. Regulations had changed which meant Valerie would need quarantine before leaving Switzerland and quarantine on returning. But her performance will be something to look forward to. An additional problem for us was that numbers attending community events in buildings like the Coton Heritage Centre have also just been limited. Payments for Valerie will be refunded.

However, all is not lost...

The original idea for the end of October was the 51st annual George Eliot readings by Gabriel Woolf and Rosalind Shanks but the Covid situation and difficulties of travel meant that Gabriel and Rosalind were unable to make the commitment.

However, they came up with a wonderful idea and a few weeks ago they went to a professional recording studio to record the readings they would have presented to us. Those recordings are being edited as I write and Gabriel and Rosalind then intend to present us with the master CD which we can have copied and packaged and sold to members and anyone else, with the profits from the sales to go to the George Eliot Visitor Centre.

It is so kind of them both, so typically thoughtful and generous, that I am sure members will want to purchase this legacy CD for themselves.

Full details of contents, price and availability will come to you in another Newsletter and they will also be available via the website. What a marvellous Christmas present it would make.....just saying!



Gabriel and Rosalind at the 50th reading event, 2019

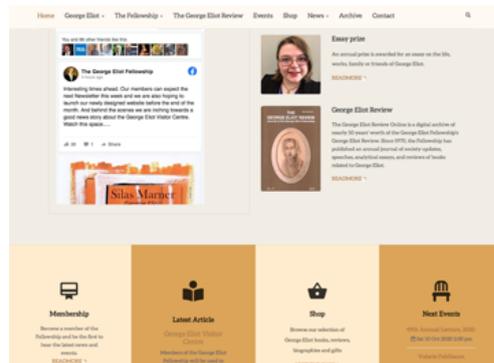
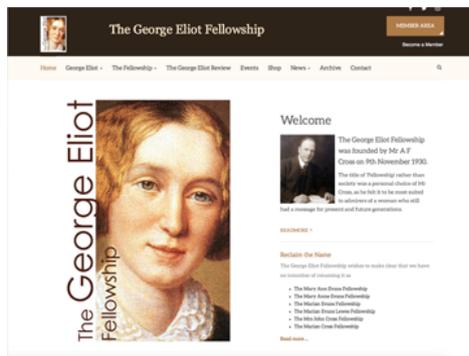
Birthday Luncheon Sunday 22 November at Weston Hall, Bulkington 12.30. Tickets £25.00

I was promised a decision by Weston Hall two days ago (I am writing this very early on 7th October) but on enquiring yesterday was told the owners are still in discussion about what events they can continue to allow. It seems to me that we are increasingly likely to have to cancel. We can't blame the hotel. Regulations seem to change daily, often in what seem quite arbitrary ways, and who knows where we will be by 22nd November?

If you have booked tickets by cheque they have not been paid in and will be returned if we cancel. If we have to cancel, we will endeavour to do something to honour the 201st birthday, possibly with a wreath at the statue in Nuneaton, and/or at the obelisk, possibly even something in Highgate. We will let everyone know as soon as we have certain news to tell you.

Latest News

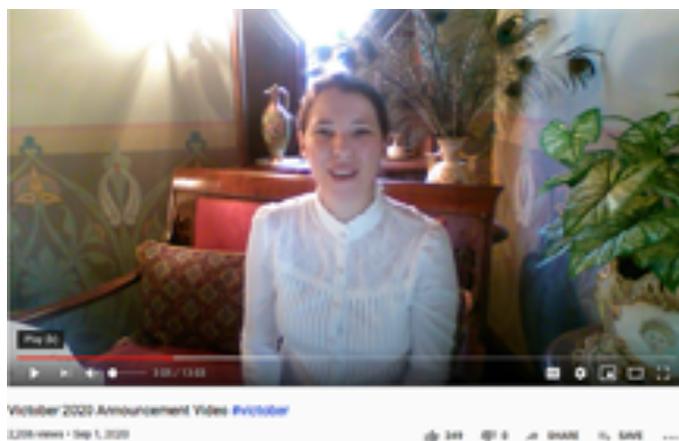
The new website



We hope you have made the time to visit the new website. We have had a wonderfully positive response from members and non-members, and a hike in membership applications. Huge congratulations to Alison Gregory, our web designer, who has really done us proud. There are still areas to complete, including the Store. There are superb links to Beverley Rilett's fantastic sites which have every one of our 50 George Eliot Reviews on line and so accessible, as well as the growing and impressive George Eliot Archive. We are adding to our own Archive section and we have already established items which can only be accessed by members. Thus, all the back numbers of Newsletters will eventually be there in the Members' section, and we are delving into our own history as a Fellowship to find interesting material to place online. We have a section on the novels and will link it to free texts of the novels as well. When interesting new material goes on to the site we will send you an email alert so that more members see the website as a place to share with other enthusiasts.

Positive Social Media

We mentioned Kate Howe who runs a YouTube channel on books in last week's Newsletter. Kate devotes October every year to Victorian literature and calls it VICTober.



Kate lives near Philadelphia. We showed her (above) in Ebenezer Maxwell Mansion, a building where her real life book group meets and she is dressed appropriately in an 1860s Victorian room. The building dates from 1859, an auspicious year in George Eliot's life.

Kate has now edited the conversation that Vivienne Wood and I had with her and if you are interested you can watch us. Kate has made two videos out of our conversations. The first will be launched on YouTube on Thursday 8th October at 10.00 am, the second on Saturday 10th at 10.00am.

