



## **Sitwell Society Newsletter Number Thirteen**

### **2014 - a year to be inspired! The Edith Sitwell Festival**

2014 is fifty years since Edith died. Edith Sitwell (7<sup>th</sup> September 1887- 9<sup>th</sup> December 1964) was a greatly regarded writer and poet in her time, and has, for the most part, been neglected in the intervening years since her death. She was born in Scarborough and spent time in her childhood there at the family home Woodend. Woodend and Scarborough echo through her poetry despite her long estrangement to the place. Her best known poem is *Façade*, a fore-runner to the modern rap. However, her later poetry – such as *Still Falls the Rain* and *Heart and Mind* – are probably the most engaging, blending, as they do, technique with deep-felt emotion.

**5th August 2014 and throughout 2014, study sessions on the first Tuesday of each month from 10am to 12 noon at Woodend Creative**, Karen Snowden will organise a "hands on" exploration of the Sitwell literary output. We continue to catalogue the collection and there will an opportunity to browse among the books. The event is free and everyone welcome.

**2<sup>nd</sup> October 2014, National Poetry Day, exhibition and events at Scarborough Library.**

Talk at Woodend Creative, The Crescent, Scarborough with Deborah Longworth from Birmingham University: **'We all have the remote air of a legend' The Sitwells, Sitwellism and Sitwelliana in the 1920s.** Edith, Osbert and Sacheverell Sitwell were at the centre of cultural society in the 1920s, with friends (and enemies) who were artists, composers, musicians, dancers, designers, as well as poets and writers. Deborah will talk about these inter-linking relationships in the context of the 1920s and the modernist movement, exploring liaisons created and broken and how these fuelled the developing myths and stories which came to surround the siblings. Deborah Longworth is Senior Lecturer in the Department of English at the University of Birmingham. Her research focuses on English literature from 1880-1940, with a specific focus on gender, modernism and the modernist novel, and she has published widely in these areas. Her recent research and current monograph focuses on the work of Edith, Osbert and Sacheverell Sitwell. She is also one of the editors on the AHRC-funded Dorothy Richardson editions project, working on the publication of scholarly editions of Richardson's fiction and collected letters. 1300-1500. Cost: £5. Contact: 01723 384500

**1st November 2014, 'Edith Sitwell (1887-1964) Remembered' at Scarborough Library**

A talk by Chris Beevers, archivist at Renishaw Hall, Derbyshire, the present day home of Alexandra Sitwell (Edith Sitwell's great-niece).

'Edith Sitwell Remembered (1887-1964)' commemorates the fiftieth anniversary of her death by looking back over the public and private lives of this extraordinary woman. She was not only a key 20th century literary figure but also a much loved sister, aunt and great aunt to the Sitwell family. Using material from Alexandra Sitwell's family archive, along with published biographical information, Chris Beevers will present the life of Edith, illustrating key milestones in her personal and professional life. A complex individual, the talk attempts to reveal the 'real' Edith, and what lay behind her public 'façade' as an avant garde poet, performer and fashion figure, often labelled 'eccentric', as well as highlighting the literary significance of her work. It will also represent another Edith, a kind, generous and loyal friend who did much to help others in private, as well as supporting new, undiscovered talent.

This is a Friends of the Library event. 1st November, 2014, 11.15am-midday (tea & coffee served from 10.30am) Cost: Free to members of Friends of the Library, £1 to non-members. Contact: Karen McCabe, 01723 367009 or Colin Langford, 01723 375602