

## **Appendix 1\_HHWG Meeting Minutes**

Title:	Excerpts from minutes 2009- 2011
Event:	HHWG Wednesday Meetings @ HH Public Library
Part 1:	Overview sample of minutes Jan- April 2010
Part 2:	Memoirs
Part 3:	Welcoming visitors
Part 4:	Food and Found Objects
Category:	Open Proposition/ Discussion/ Crit/ Minutes Sample curriculum of a commons generated by co-operative learning
Format :	Email, transcript, Image
Date:	2009- 2011
Time:	1-3pm weekly meetings
Contributors:	HHWG attendees

## Pt 1 Overview sample of minutes Jan- April 2010

This is included to demonstrate the wealth of a curriculum generated from interest driven topics and the commons which form. The minutes serve as an informal recap as a positive alternative to the report function expected in current education systems. They are shared with the community joyfully rather than as a chore.

15/3

S.B introduced us to Eva Berenji who developed a cancer care center in Novi Sad, in former Yugoslavia. S.B may invite her grandchildren to respond to her work via email or facebook, carry on the conversation S.B, the finished product is well and good but the age of the internet may encourage the memoir to be written in collaboration rather than in isolation. Hope it all works out.

[D.G's] Floyd (see image) visits his friend Captain Augustus in rather gory circumstances. A fun portrait of a sea farer who attempts to conquer time travel given fear of an excessively giant octopus has exiled him from the dear old ocean. *A few comments and criticisms on framing and repetition but grand to hear mad old Floyd back in action.*



Floyd by D.G

L.D presents the first installment of Tom Gray, the start of a criticism of over reliance on pseudo psychology, lots of critical witty detail and a furious sketch to push ahead to a deeper darker satire wherein we will see if Tom Gray emerges freed from "well meaning wellness"

Lizzie set up a curious backdrop of Cambridge Drive where an unwelcome flatmate is described in delicious detail. Avril Paton's artwork based on Tenement portraiture was referenced.

29/3

S.B shared a whirlwind adventure of embarking on the Orient Express to the land of storks and sunflowers Istanbul. The lovely touch about learning "I love you" in every language in every country until reaching her destination was a particular gold nugget. Pronouns and target audience confusions were noted, but hopefully more of "Jack and S.B" will be back with adventures in the Holy Land!

31/3

MH to group: Special thanks to those there yesterday who gave me added food for thought in response to my "Spanish Steps" which as a result is retitled "The pavement cutters" and I have attached a copy so you can see the difference. I think it is a great improvement so thanks again!

## Pt2 Memoirs as stimulus

*excerpts from minutes 2010- 2011*

### Memoirs as focus of workshop; storytelling

*For the opening exercise the group reminisced about first times. We heard of WW2 evacuations, rowing boat romances, unpleasant peas, wrong lines, Primary prizes, Baltic ruins, reluctant suckling and hirsute bookies.*

In this 2 year period recorded below are 27 examples of oral histories, memoir writing.

predominantly by S.B and a few episodes of Glasgow life in the 50s and 60s via DM, CM and LD.

When asked if they would be willing to go to schools to share these memoirs with youth, they all resolutely declined. S.B said “I’ve given up my time to volunteering with refugees and Iona, that is someone else’s job.” D.M who joined in mid 2010 “As a retired school teacher, I have done my time and don’t want to go back.”. These responses are symptoms of a barrier between community and school life which does both parties a great disservice

*Philosophy: Ranciere and the nights of labour. dealing with personal histories.*

**13 Jan 2010, 20:54** Re: Hillhead Writer's Group 2-4pm

Hello wordsmiths,

A warm reception to E., a newcomer, who is interested in developing family histories to hand down to her family. Interesting discussions on how not to get too lost in too much social history and perhaps to simply document the past and let the everyday curiosities speak for themselves.

**20/4**

Sharing the Table of plenty:

S.B's travels through Turkey continue. Hospitable turks driven by coin or fresh faces keep us enthralled in the land of carpets in courtyards, August heat in adventures in Zonguldak and Goreme warmed the imagination. Thank you S.B for the armchair adventure.

Tasso leapt in with a submission for a contest entitled Computer Blues. We were merciless but hopefully constructive. A clean sharp tale about a man whose attachment to his personal computer comes to a mysterious impasse.

M.R's wonderful poem about a tricky trip to Skye was well received. The form took on the subject matter, with vignettes and images disappearing and reappearing as we engaged with the cuillins through the eyes of heroic windscreen wipers and a tense disagreement resolved in a quiet apology, artful and intriguing. More please.

L.D shared a sketch of a poem as well "Precipice" a vivid poetic description of the Scottish landscape as a withered face, but also precipice for L.D to leap off the edge into a deeper investigation perhaps of some dark novel dwelling in the rotten teeth and mossy bits. Go Louise.

and because we are ambitious, and gosh Eileen we really missed your tea, or at least I did, never realised how it gave such a pleasant pause til we were without.

D.M presented a chapter about Christmas in '59-60s. The intriguing episode between him and Mrs Stewart's rebuke of "X'mas". Dreams of representing toy soldiers with snarly faces and straighter instruments of war; longing for lego and Davey Crocket plastic model making, the loving descriptions of Christmas from a boy. Hopefully we hear the rest of the chapter. S.B said it reminded her very much of Amos Oz's powerful and dense descriptions in [\*A Tale of Love and Darkness\*](#) (? it was the only one about childhood memoirs I could find close to the suggested title S.B, please correct if I am mistaken)

ST - what a tour de force. I am breathless with admiration!. [\*A tale of love and darkness\*](#) is exactly correct, thanks. S.

## 2010

**31/1/10**

We finished with a piece from S.B which reflected on an incident in Africa that she experienced and which will form part of a chronicle of her life which she is hoping to complete so that her grandchildren (and others?) can read. The account prompted detailed discussion and lots of food for thought.

**22/2**

M.H also shared a wonderful letter from his grandad to his dad from 1946 when his father was returning from Italy. M.H's explored the curious and mystical genetic imprints in this correspondence to his family's own quirky preoccupations with the weather and some other uncanny similarities. Magic. Looking forward to the mining and the work that follows!

In the spirit of double happiness and good fortunes, we had a wonderful spread of sharing today. Double happiness in Chinese culture celebrates weddings and we had two pieces dedicated to the ritual, Eileen and S.B both shared on the subject, one as memoir and the other as fiction.

**10/3**

S.B shared a wonderful episode the "Banff Debacle" another pearl/bead/gold link in building her treasury for her grand children. What a lucky lot we are to share in her discoveries. The next installment will unfortunately be in 2 weeks as she is away, so we wait to hear how the crossing of Canada continues.

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**16/7/10**

C.M shared recollections of childhood pain and poultices ... while S.B continued her youthful Middle East journey.

**30/7**

C.M remembered childhood fairs with impressive pachyderms but disappointing fleas

**10/8**

C.M dredged a bed jacket<sup>1</sup> from her 50s memories...

**5/10**

S.B recalled confusing train connections and bellowing in Belarus, C.M remembered a young teacher and a corporal punishment dilemma;

**25/10**

S.B read about her trip to the Ukraine to support the Children of Chernobyl charity

**22/11**

S.B continued her memoir and took us on dusty walks as flights were delayed in Jerusalem.

## 2011

**10/2**

S.B provided a platform for a Canadian story, Gordon took us down some mean Glasgow streets

**28/3**

S.B read a piece from her memoirs about returning to teaching after a 10 year gap to find a familiar face in the classroom.

**9/5/11**

L.D read her thoughts on the Royal and other weddings, illustrated by photos of a traumatic 70s wedding, when she was a bridesmaid .

**27/8**

S.B read the introduction to her asylum seeker's stories,

**2/9**

S.B read a very interesting piece about the first destitute asylum-seeker, a young Iraqi man, who stayed for a period in her home.

**23/9**

...M.R's poem based on an old photograph of her father and brothers working outdoors.

**6/10**

S.B read the recent section of her account of the asylum seekers she has helped and housed over the years. *Michael from Zimbabwe was another fascinating story, an eye opener to the author and all of us listening. Salim from Somalia is a brief section, as he was out the house almost all the time.*

**29/10**

S.B read more of her asylum seeker stories, this time featuring a woman from Zimbabwe struggling to overcome a Catch-22 situation.

**21/10**

D.M read a poem about moving house in 1962.

**11/11**

S.B read a new asylum seeker story where a hot water bottle helped overcome a language barrier and D.M shared a poem about those that rose to the challenge facing Britain in August 1940.

**17/11**

S.B read "Sha-Ling" from China, her most recent section of the book of her own experience of housing asylum seekers in her home.

**3/12**

M.R presented a poem of memories from 1968 of girls going too and from a dance. It brought back memories for all of us.

**19/12**

C.M treated us to panto memories from 1952.

### **Pt 3 Welcoming Strangers**

This section is from a wider selection of minutes 2009 -2010 which document the group's open membership and the contributions from visitors who bring new forms of writing, perspectives and elements. Insights and possibilities which could be adapted to personal preferred form, prose, poetry or memoirs.

**9/11/09**

A new person may join us, Sashi from Kerala, India, he has written 2 novels and is working on his MBA.

**13/11**

Hi writers, A.Hawes will be joining us next session with a few scripts to be workshopped perfect for showing vs telling.

**10/8/10**

After Fraser, a friend of Tasso's, told us about the life coaching book he is planning, there was some discussion on this and the idea he introduced of a writing coach .

It was agreed the 10 minute exercise would be a list of 10 things to include in a self-help book.

**20/8/10**

John shared part of the story of a young girl brought to cold grey England who missed her ayah and the colour and warmth of India.

## **Pt 4 Food and Found Objects**

### **Food**

**9/11/10**

For the opening exercise the group got its teeth into the topic biscuits. We heard about, mouth watering dilemmas, mixed marriages, kooky cookie jars, pat-a-cakes and Jaffa cakes, crumbs of comfort that turned to dust, disgusting digestives and disastrous dunking.

**15/11/10**

We did a quick warm up based on the topic "Secret Recipes" bad idea on an empty stomach but loving good fun. Drop scones, cheater chicken stew, veggie pesto, Floyd's grandmother's recipe for poison, lost jams, convivial society, homemade dog biscuits and haggis surprise with traces of Bob's emptied pockets. a very nice buffet gang!

**3/5/11**

For the 10 minute writing exercise we considered the topic of 'tea breaks'. We were taken into the woods where it came in all flavours, into verse where it broke up rhymes and in bonnie Scotland it was suggested substituting them with Brazilian coffee might improve our footballers.

### **Objects**

**20/4/10**

For the writing exercise we all put a personal object on the table and after some, quite frankly unseemly grabbing, we wrote a piece inspired by the item. We heard about a photograph of a fire hazard glue factory, an MP3 recorder bring back memories of a whirring reel to reel tape deck (see below), a cooling cologne stick conjuring up Victorian hygiene issues, the stones on a costume jewellery double stranded necklace being mistaken for diamonds and emeralds, various expectorations that can be found on a paper hanky, a discriminated against lonesome pinecone, and a self-motivated pen.

**1/12/10**

As we were putting out the chairs a discarded hair clip in the form of a dusty purple rose was discovered lying on the floor. Lost? Discarded? We are destined never to know. Its faded elegance provided the stimulus for this week's opening exercise. We heard about a jumble sale and trinket box, a vase and Debussy on the piano, an uncharitable charity shop manager, a winter rose's short days and long nights and a red red, faced, torch singer.



**30/1**

Our exercise took recent book titles, and we were invited to use one or more of them for our story. We had a sentimentalist who attended a self-help group; the Tiger's wife who ran off with another man: a poem based on an address; a tiger being moved to a new home: and a coincidence engine being developed by a Chinaman.

**22/5/11**

For the writing exercise we chose a book title from the adjacent shelves as our inspiration. We heard about gin bottles and dog-eared letters, frogs and out-smiled mothers, wacky ladies and microwaved handbags, invaded senses and eclipsed moons, obsessions with purse-like frogs, steaming tunnels and gasped air, and cosmic gigs with ear plugs.

**26/3**

We did a 15 minute warm up exercise inspired by objects I brought in. The idea was to choose an object and then write about a character who had come into Hillhead Library but wasn't looking for reading material. We had a carpenter looking for a wife, a man looking for someone to help him cast on (knitting), an alien looking for...There was another really good one I'm racking my brains to remember - put me out of my misery Eileen?

***Excerpt of a 10 minute warm up exercise from a meeting 20/4/10***

S.B: I'm told it is an M-p-3 recorder what next? Fancy me grabbing this let's analyse it. M-mmmmm I'm not sure. P, that's easy just add -ee or -iss. 3, a number, I've always liked it, somehow magical it has 3 curves and rhymes with so many other words like pee for instance. A recorder, now what will we say about that? It reminds me of my Father in law, who acquired an enormous appliance with whirling spools, lights and noises, it was called a recorder, it would do just that. it recorded our voices, our singing, the birds, what you will. It was a fascinating object but somehow it is superseded today in our technological age by this m-P-3 recorder. It is small innocent looking, but locked inside I know are cobwebs and ... and digital voice recorders. There is even a silver button in the middle, which I have just made out says "play". It is Olympian it says so it says Olympus on top of it. As I pick it up I see Mic, Mic and ear. You can stop it if you like. Guess where it is made... Yes China. That leads me off into wild realms of fantasy in Macau I must learn how to use it - What next?

DM: Brilliant. Well done, terrific.

*Murmur of approval.*

DM: It's great, lots of play on words and puns. L.D is up next.

*(Supportive)*

L.D: ...can't read her own handwriting. That's the end for me. *(Making mistakes)*