

THE FOREST THAT SAILED AWAY

Over the centuries shipbuilding took millions of trees and left the forests, including the Royal Wychwood Forest, in crisis by Nelson's time. You will know of the Wychwood Project's redevelopment activities in this ancient woodland.

Two West Oxfordshire artists have collaborated in producing a book inspired by this project. Elizabeth Birchall's poetry and Amanda Henriques's illustrations celebrate the forest, the sailors and the ships.

WERE WE BLIND....

.....we would know you –
Would hear the murmuring city of your leaves,
Run fingers down your ancient trunks
To trace the fissures of your face;
Would stride across the frosted clods
And snap the brittle twigs
While breath hangs still and heavy in the air;
Would feel the soft lank grass of spring
And summer's tough resistant stems;
Would smell the spicy tang
Of dry and falling leaves
And taste the bittersweet of blackberries.

We would dance with Matisse around the year
Wild beneath your wind-tossed boughs.

Elizabeth Birchall

The Forest that Sailed Away – The Book

A homage to Wychwood Forest and to the sailors whose ships were built from its trees. The book draws on the mythic meaning of individual trees and original accounts of historic voyages, and closes with poems celebrating our renewed sensitivity to ecological balance and diversity.

"Elizabeth Birchall's compelling long poem 'Godfrey's Story' has an irresistible narrative energy, drawing on the ballad, social history and devotion to place. And in *The Forest that Sailed Away* its exoticism and colour are wrapped round with a series of prayer-like seasonal reflections on English trees. This is a captivating book". Bernard O'Donoghue

"A magnificent tribute to the power and significance of our ancient forests and a great feat of imagination that has literally 'sailed away' from its roots. The poems resonate in the mind long after the book is closed. All those who love trees and wish to conserve them will want to buy this book".

Jenny Lewis.

Elizabeth Birchall lives in Enstone. Her poetry appears in several anthologies and magazines, including *Rialto* and *Envoi*.

Amanda Henriques lives in Shipton-under-Wychwood. She is a teacher at local schools, a painter and printmaker



The poems grew out of a community arts project – The Forest that Sailed Away – culminating in a performance at Minster Lovell Hall on 15/16 September 2000.

Paperback 64pages 1-902279-10-7

'The Forest that Sailed Away' is now available from:

Slade Cottage, Oxford Road, Enstone, (01608-677271),

or Amanda Henriques, Carters Barn, Plum Lane, Shipton-under-Wychwood (01993 831403),

Price £7.99 post free.

POPPY APPEAL 2000

The recent coverage in the media of the 60th anniversary of the Battle of Britain must certainly have helped us all to realise just how close we came to defeat in WW2. It appears that had Hitler realised the situation, he could easily have gone ahead with his plans for the invasion. Fortunately he did not, but the subsequent years of fighting still took a considerable toll in terms of killed and injured.

The resultant need for aid given by the Poppy Appeal is ever-growing due to the age of the injured survivors, and dependants of those killed, plus further demands due to subsequent conflicts and peace-keeping operations involving our armed forces.

There is a tendency for these needs to be forgotten, but it is hoped that the recent reminders will help to make this year's collection the biggest ever.

Please help to achieve this and **WEAR YOUR POPPY WITH PRIDE.**