



Published on *East Coker Poetry Group* (<http://www.eastcokerpoetry.org.uk>)

[Home](#) > [Printer-friendly PDF](#) > [Printer-friendly PDF](#)

About the group

East Coker is a picturesque South Somerset village of around 1800 inhabitants, a few miles south west of Yeovil. It is famous for being the birthplace of the navigator, pirate and botanist, William Dampier, who explored the west coast of Australia, and as the burial place of the great 20th century poet, Thomas Stearns Eliot. The village was immortalised in TS Eliot's *Four Quartets*, published in 1943.

*In my beginning is my end. Now the light falls
Across the open field, leaving the deep lane
Shuttered with branches, dark in the afternoon
Where you lean against a bank while a van passes,
And the deep lane insists on the direction
Into the village, in the electric heat
Hypnotised. In a warm haze the sultry light
Is absorbed, not refracted, by grey stone.
The dahlias sleep in the empty silence.
Wait for the early owl.*

Although the poet was born in St Louis, Missouri, in 1888, he moved to England as a young man and remained here until his death in 1965. His ashes are buried in the churchyard of St Michael's Church, and there is a commemorative plaque in the church. With this heritage, there is an understandable enthusiasm for poetry in the village and we decided to form the East Coker Poetry Group.

Meetings are entertaining, informal and sociable. They are held either in the Skittle Alley, or the Apple Loft Restaurant, or the [Helyar Arms](#), a 15th century village inn, a short stroll across the paddock from St Michael's Church. Membership is free and everyone is welcome, including visitors to the village and guests staying at the Helyar Arms. Our meetings regularly attract 20 - 30 poetry lovers.

For more information, [contact](#) David Cloke or Joyce Best.

News

The Village of East Coker is threatened by a huge urban development of 3,700 houses and industrial units. South Somerset District Council is pushing ahead with plans to expand the town of Yeovil right up to the edge of the village. Keep track of developments at saveeastcoker.com

The Richard Jefferies Society Poetry Competition 2011-2012 - Details of this competition have been sent to us by member Rebecca Welshman - see our 'News' page

Music and Poetry at St Michael's Church, East Coker - see our news page

Copyright © 2004-2012 East Coker Poetry Group | [Admin](#)

Source URL: <http://www.eastcokerpoetry.org.uk/node>