

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF EASTBOURNE
KATHERINE MANSFIELD'S *AT THE BAY*: A PHOTOGRAPHIC TRIBUTE
CAPTURING FIVE SCENES FROM THE STORY
Background information by Anne Manchester

This booklet describes how our tribute came about, how a small team combined their diverse talents and used local resources to create a unique audiovisual presentation to honour Eastbourne's most famous holidaymaker.

Credits

Producer: John Horrocks
Director & narrator: Anne Manchester
Photographer & editor: Simon Hoyle
Archival photographic research: Ali Carew, Historical Society of Eastbourne

Cast

Stanley Burnell: Ashley Bloomfield	The Boy: Vincent Waters
Jonathan Trout: Jonathan Knox	Beryl Fairfield: Jasmine Stock
Linda Burnell: Lian Butcher	Harry Kember: Hayden Rogers

Music

Arnold Trowell

Meditation Op 4, No 9

Sarabande Op 11, No 5

Nocturne Op 16

Mélodie Op 7, No 1

Arioso Op 4, No 7

Pastorale Op 15, No 5

Cello Martin Griffiths, piano Chikako Komaki

Sonata in F, Nos 1 & 3

Cello Joseph Spooner, piano Kathryn Mosley

Acknowledgements

The Eastbourne-Bays Community Trust

Southlight Studio, Days Bay

The Butterfly Creek Theatre Troupe of Eastbourne

Wellesley College, Days Bay, and principal Michael Bain

Sound advice Don Paulin

The production was filmed in Days Bay and Eastbourne, New Zealand, 2023

Tribute

This photographic tribute to Katherine Mansfield's short story *At the Bay* is a new production and includes actors from Eastbourne's Butterfly Creek Theatre Troupe. Directed by Anne Manchester, it captures five vignettes from the story (I, II, VI, XII and XIII), accompanied by narration. The presentation is 18 minutes

long. It has been dramatised using a combination of archival photographs, along with many reconstructed images by local photographer Simon Hoyle. Simon compiled the video production, using his editing skills to create a sense of movement and drama. The reconstructed scenes were 'aged' to match the black and white archival images. The soundtrack includes sound effects and music by composer Arnold Trowell.

Team

In addition to Simon Hoyle, members of the team are authors themselves and very familiar with Mansfield's work. John Horrocks, producer, has written about Mansfield's time in Germany, as well as finding a place in his recent historical novel, *Dark Empire*, for two of her most sinister characters. Ali Carew, archival photographic research, is a member of the Historical Society of Eastbourne, and co-author of *Eastbourne: A History of the Eastern Bays of Wellington Harbour*. Anne Manchester, a former film editor and film restorer, brings to the project her experience as an actor and director of local drama productions. Librarian Megan Davey, from the Eastbourne Library, offers considerable local knowledge.

Beginnings

When John Horrocks suggested in late 2022 that a group get together and do something locally to mark this KM centenary, the initial thoughts revolved around a reading of the story, in various locations. But, somehow, the idea of doing something more permanent emerged. So, from humble beginnings, a unique creation emerged, combining archival photos from the area with recreated images, capturing something of the essence of the story.

Having decided to create a tribute in photographs, using actors and narration, we realised we could not possibly do the whole story. We set out, instead, to capture its spirit in just a few carefully selected scenes. The first and last vignettes – the very beginning and end of the story - gave us the greatest scope for using the archival photos. Vignettes II, VI and XII were chosen as they each involved scenes between just two of the characters. This felt achievable in the format of using still photographs.

The initial questions Simon and I faced were just how many photos would be needed to capture the drama; what music should we use; and should the actors voice the dialogue or should the narrator read it all? These questions took a while to answer. In the end it was decided to have a single narrative voice to hold the production together and to avoid uneven sound levels.

Music

A breakthrough with the music emerged when we recalled Katherine had loved the cello and once dreamed of making a career as a cellist herself. This led us to the music of Arnold Trowell, her friend and contemporary from Wellington, who also travelled to Europe to continue his studies.

New Zealand cellist Martin Griffiths, who gained a doctorate on the life and music of Trowell in 2012, offered us various recordings of Trowell's music that he had submitted for his doctorate. Martin is also known for his KM scholarship. Kathryn Mosley, from Victoria University of Wellington's School of Music, offered us another Trowell recording featuring piano and cello.

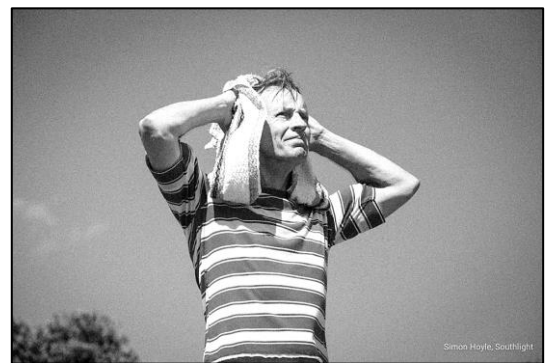
Local response, local actors

John Horrocks and his team of local enthusiasts wanted this tribute to be a local response, using the various skills we had and local actors, including, as it turned out, Sir Ashley Bloomfield. Knighted in early 2023, Ashley became a familiar face on our television screens during our COVID lockdowns and other restrictions in 2020 and 2021, delivering daily pandemic updates in his role as Director-General of Health. An Eastbourne local and a former member of the theatre troupe, he agreed to don the stripey swimsuit and play Stanley Burnell, with only a week's notice, after the actor originally cast was unable to continue. Having Ashley in our film certainly helped raise its public profile.

I am delighted with the performances of the actors. They really capture the characters of Stanley and Linda Burnell (pictured), Jonathan Trout, Beryl Fairfield, Harry Kember and the Boy.

Timeframe

The project took about five months. We began work in February 2023 with an extensive search of archival photos held by the Historical Society of Eastbourne, identifying those most suitable to match the narration. Simon took the photos of the recreated scenes in March, and then the slow process of weaving the photos together began. Where there were gaps, some additional photos were taken or stock shots used. Blending the soundtrack was also demanding, as we sought to



Stanley Burnell [Ashley Bloomfield]



Linda Burnell [Lian Butcher]

balance music with narration and some sound effects. Simon and I had to do various reshoots and decided to recruit a real baby for the scene between Linda Burnell and the Boy; initially we'd thought a doll would do.

Katherine Mansfield's links to the Eastern Bays

When Katherine Mansfield was young, her family, the Beauchamps, spent several summer holidays in the bays. In the late 1890s and early 1900s they rented The Glen, in Muritai (believed to be the model for the Burnells' holiday bungalow) and from 1906 they owned a small cottage at Downes Point, Days Bay. In *At the Bay*, Mansfield recreates a day in the life of the 'summer colony', as she called it, based on those long-ago family holidays. She wrote it when she was living in Montana-sur-Sierre, Switzerland (now known as Sierre), ill with tuberculosis and homesick for New Zealand. Despite her illness, she wrote several dozen stories while convalescing in Switzerland, completing *At the Bay*, which she described as a 'seaweed story', on 11 September 1921. 'I hope it is good,' she wrote to her friend Dorothy Brett. 'It is as good as I can do and all my heart and soul is in it – every single bit.' Today, it is one of Mansfield's best-loved stories, with a special place in the hearts of local Mansfield enthusiasts.

Arnold Trowell (1887-1966)

Arnold was a New Zealand composer, cellist and teacher, who became Professor of Music at the Guildhall School of Music in London. Born in Wellington, he was the son of music teacher Thomas Trowell (who also taught music to the young Kathleen Mansfield Beauchamp) and twin of Garnet Trowell. In 1903 both brothers went to Europe to study – Arnold the cello and Garnet the violin. Katherine and Arnold continued to correspond when Mansfield was living in London and Trowell was studying in Brussels. Mansfield later fell in love with Garnet and became pregnant by him. Arnold Trowell's compositions include seven concertos, three sonatas, four symphonic poems and numerous pieces for cello and piano. He gave hundreds of concerts throughout Great Britain and often broadcast with the BBC.

Endnote

Being part of this project and working with such a creative, committed group of people has been a privilege. If you know the story *At the Bay*, we hope the images we have captured in our tribute will add to your own. And if you don't know it, perhaps you will be inspired to dig out your copy of KM's stories and get reading. The tribute can also be viewed at vimeo.com/southlightnz/KM2023
