

Masefield Matters Newsletter

Winter 2025



What We've Been Doing

Masefield Matters is a three-year project culminating in the celebration of his birth in 2028.

It is split into three phases, the first of which has been to raise awareness of Masefield and the impression that his formative years in Ledbury left on his work. Since the launch the project team has been running workshops as well as attending community events.



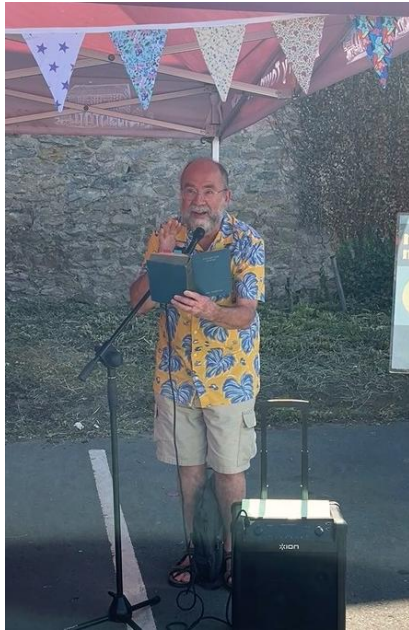
In May and June, we arranged for a local youth group to visit Childer Wood to take part in nature and woodworking-based activities, based on John Masefield's own interest in woodwork and many references to nature in his poetry (right). In August and October Red Earth Arts ran art and word workshops for children aged 7 – 13. These sessions allowed them to explore their own creative ideas by writing and drawing.



In October, we visited Cutty Sark and the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich alongside 15 pupils from John Masefield High School. They got the chance to step into the young John Masefield's shoes and climb the ship's rigging (left). This activity allowed young people who had not had the chance of venturing away from Ledbury to explore further afield and take part in a unique experience.

We are currently running an ongoing research activity in the John Masefield Society Archive with the Ledbury u3a. Caroline Magnus, a great niece of John Masefield, delivered a fascinating talk to the u3a local history group to kick off the project. The group will be researching Masefield's family and names found in inscriptions in books in the Archive.

Alongside our standalone events, Masefield Matters has also run information stalls and children's events at Community Day, Celebration Day, Ledbury Carnival and the Christmas Lights Switch-On.



Masefield Moments

We've had some amazing local poets and Masefield fans sharing their favourite Masefield works at community events in Ledbury. Stephen Chappell, Cllr Justine Peberdy, Dr Philip W. Errington and performer Jonny Fluffypunk (among many others) have all shared poems that are meaningful to them. You can see clips of these on our Instagram, Facebook and website.

Upcoming Events

Coming soon will be activities with Ledbury Refugee Support Group and a reminiscence project with local care homes. We will also be running a youth dance activity based on Masefield's *The Midnight Folk* in the spring half term. Other events include Ledbury's Bookfest on World Book Day and follow up activities from the Cutty Sark trip with John Masefield High School.

Consultation Phase

We recently brought on board consultation specialists Janine Rusby and Andrew Meredith. They are beginning the consultation process when the community will have the opportunity of working towards what sort of memorial they would like to see. Janine and Andrew will be running workshops at future events but in the meantime you might like to fill in the survey through the QR code or via our website www.ledburytowncouncil.gov.uk/masefield.



Get Involved

We share news on all our activities, alongside a range of videos, audio clips and photographs relating to John Masefield and his work on our website. Our blog features posts about the activities we run, as well as posts about John Masefield himself and what inspired his work. On the website, you can also find an FAQ page and information about how you can donate to the project. You can get in touch with us via our Instagram and Facebook pages.

Website and Blog: www.ledburytowncouncil.gov.uk/masefield

Instagram: @masefield_matters

Facebook: Masefield Matters

