

### **‘Love and Conflict, Fear and Delight’ – a feast of poetry and music about and from the Borders.**

Visitors to the Heritage Centre at Bellingham, Northumberland, on Sunday 7 August are in for a huge treat as award-winning poet Pippa Little and the wonderful local traditional ‘crowder’ (fiddler) Rachel Pearson are to perform there at 2.30 pm. Pippa will read from her acclaimed collection ‘FORAY: Border Reiver Women’ while fourth-generation fiddler Rachel will respond with tunes from the area. On their only previous collaboration, also at the Heritage Centre, the women delighted the audience with their poems, music and banter.

The title of the event is taken from a review by Sean O’Brien, professor of creative writing at Newcastle University (and an award-winning poet, playwright and broadcaster) of *Foray*: **‘Foray is an enthralling evocation of the lives of the Border Reivers, seen from a female perspective. Love and conflict, fear and delight – the blend is rich, chilling and emotionally exact. Pippa Little is a poet with a wonderful sense of musical shape and weight, so that story and song are inseparable in her work. I recommend it highly.’**

Rachel Pearson lives on the ‘banks of the bonny North Tyne’. She loves the tunes and melodies she grew up hearing, especially the lively ones.

Visitors will also have the opportunity of viewing the new Bellingham Flood of 1911 exhibition which opens on Friday 5 August.

Refreshments will be provided. Admission is £4.50 (no concessions). This is an outdoor event (marquee in the event of rain). The event is being part-sponsored by Northumberland National Park Authority. Bookings: [info@bellingham-heritage.org.uk](mailto:info@bellingham-heritage.org.uk) or (01434) 220 616 or 220 050.

#### **NOTES TO EDITORS / PICTURE EDITORS**

##### **Attached:**

1. Photographs (.jpeg) and biographical notes on Pippa Little and Rachel Pearson;
2. Notes on *Foray* and the Border Reivers, and photo of Pippa & Rachel at the Heritage Centre.

##### **Further information:**

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**ENDS**

## Biographical Notes: Pippa Little and Rachel Pearson

### **Pippa Little, poet**



Pippa Little has lived in Northumberland for 20 years. A Scot, while researching for her collection on women Border Reivers *Foray* she discovered reiving ancestors of her own and also that her husband's family, the Littles, had ridden on both sides of the border.

An award-winning poet, Pippa Little's first collection, *The Spar Box*, was a Poetry Book Society pamphlet choice. In 2008 she won The Biscuit International Poetry Prize and in 2009 the Andrew Waterhouse Award. Her work has been published in numerous magazines and anthologies, on the internet and the radio, and she has also co-edited two Virago anthologies of women's writing. She is well-known to lovers of poetry through her collections and her readings.

### **Rachel Pearson, fiddler**



Rachel Pearson trained as a designer at Glasgow School of Art. She has worked for many years as a mural artist, working as far away as Dubai. She is now based back in Northumberland where, among other things, she works as a landscape and wildlife artist specialising in watercolour.

'I was born in the North Tyne Valley and still live on the Banks of the Bonny North Tyne. I am a fourth generation fiddler – my father, grandfather and great, great-uncle were all 'crowders' before me. I still love the tunes and melodies that I grew up hearing, especially the lively ones!'

## ***Foray, Border Reiver Women*** by Pippa Little

Published by Biscuit Publishing, October 2009

ISBN: 978-1-903914-35-9

£6.99 paperback

“From the first poem of *Foray* I am with Pippa Little, She takes me by the hand and heart on her brilliant exploration of the previously unsung women of the Border Reivers. Her poems are demanding, intimate and downright beautiful. They shine in their chosen territory, reminding us that poetry is always the stuff of life. Delight in *Foray*. Pass it on.”

- Anna Woodford

## **THE BORDER REIVERS**

The Border Reivers raided and feuded 300 years ago across from Berwick to Carlisle, from Galashiels to Hexham and beyond. Political interests kept these lands a battleground. Names like the Armstrongs, Elliots, Grahams, Maxwells and Robsons survived poverty, lawlessness and violence through their family loyalty, fierce independence and rich culture of music and poetry.



Rachel Pearson and Pippa Little at the Heritage Centre, November 2009.