



*June 2021
Newsletter*

Issue 9: June 2021

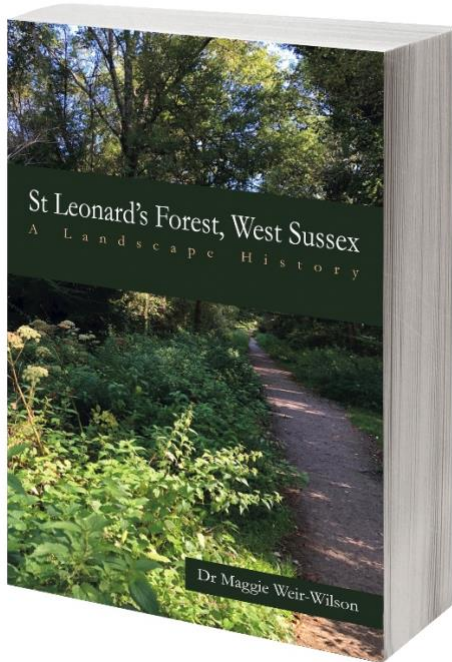
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Local Book Launch Event

Finally ... the opportunity to celebrate the launch of St Leonard's Forest: A Landscape History by Dr Maggie Weir Wilson

The Olive Branch, Horsham is proud to host an evening with Dr Maggie Weir Wilson



Tuesday 29th June at 8.00 p.m.

Tickets are £5.00 each and include a glass of prosecco or a soft drink, Maggie will be interviewed about her books and will read from St Leonard's Forest: A Landscape History. There will also be an opportunity for a Q&A.

Tickets are available from Waterstones, The Carfax, Horsham, where you can buy copies of Maggie's book, which she will be happy to sign on the night.

Anyone wishing to eat at the Olive Branch prior to this event should contact the Olive Branch to book their table: 01403 252286

We look forward to seeing you there ...

Print book ISBN: 9781838343606 e-Book ISBN:978818343613

Poem to Think About: Spring is Showing Her Head, by Tony Bauckham

Grove to Threals with newly watered multi coloured, shooting weeds skirting the lanes;

Up on the ridge a permanent panorama from Chantonbury to Petersfield.

Agnus up to their eyeballs in fresh new grass;

comforted by mum and a hiding place.

‘Dogs on leads please!’

The warm zephyr from the south bringing martins, swifts and swallows,

with Painted Ladies dancing in the muddy sunlight of the path;

only resting to warm up and generate more zest.

Touching styles is questionable,

but how to climb aloft without a hand?

The passing hoard of ramblers twice injected,

seem back to normal as their score group climbs and jumps,

sticks clicking in the wind.

I counted ten hellos. Was there a lunch split into sixes?

The humid warmth is unusual, though welcome,

bringing with it a bounty of nature

and a feeling of release.

I am uplifted by the abundance of sights and thrills before me.

Spring is showing her head.



Book Quiz Questions – Round 1 in May 2021

Round 2 in June 2021: <https://www.penguin.co.uk/articles/2020/may/ideas-book-pub-quiz-questions-rounds.html>

Round 2

Name the Author

Can you guess the writer from these clues (and, of course, the fewer you need the better)?

1.

- A. He was Britain's biggest selling non-fiction writer of the 2000s.
- B. He shares a catchphrase with the main character of a much-loved British sitcom.
- C. His surname is a male first name.
- D. His *5 Ingredients* was Britain's biggest selling book of 2017.

2.

- A. Now one of Britain's most famous poets, he died in obscurity in London in 1827.
- B. He had visions of angels from boyhood onwards.
- C. He claimed that in 1788 his brother Robert taught him the technique of 'illuminated printing' that he used to produce many of his books – even though Robert had died the previous year.
- D. One of his poems is sung at every Labour Party conference and on every day of English Test cricket – and is the unofficial anthem of the Women's Institute.

3.

- A. A passionate opponent of slavery, she worked as a nurse in the American Civil War.
- B. Her middle name is a month of the year.
- C. She wrote a series of novels about the March family . . .
- D. . . . which begins with *Little Women*.

4. A. He served as an artillery officer in the Crimean War.

- B. In later life he became such a radical Christian that he was excommunicated by the Orthodox Church.
- C. Parts of one of his novels first appeared in the magazine *The Russian Messenger* under the title *The Year 1805*.
- D. Its final title was *War and Peace*.

5.

- A. His middle name was Hoyer.
- B. His only play was *Buchanan Dying*, about James Buchanan, the only U.S. president from Pennsylvania.
- C. His first big seller, in 1968, was *Couples*, which led to him appearing on the cover of *Time* magazine with the strapline 'The Adulterous Society'.

D. He wrote four novels about a former high-school basketball star called Harry Angstrom, better known as 'Rabbit'.

6.

A. Before becoming a full-time writer in her forties, she was a TV executive.

B. Her real name is Erika Leonard.

C. The three bestselling novels in Britain of 2012 were all by her . . .

D. . . . and all featured two main characters whose first names are Anastasia and Christian.



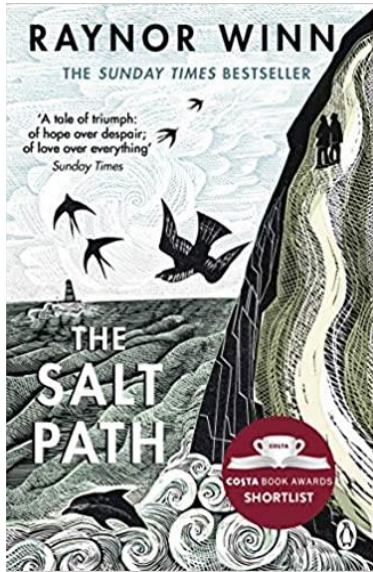
Photo: Getty Images / Louisa May Alcott

Book Reviews: The Midnight Library by Matt Haig, reviewed by Jackie Parsons



After a failed attempt to take her own life, the protagonist finds herself in an in between world, the eponymous midnight library. Each book in the library represents a different life to which she can choose to return. The reader follows her through various possibilities, each of which finishes as she realises it's not suitable or reaches a situation which she cannot solve. The cynic in me wonders whether each scenario stops when the author can't decide where it's going. I can be so mean! However, the ending is well worked out and incorporates some elements of her other lives. A delightful easy read, not too demanding. Perhaps for the beach or on a holiday flight?

Book Reviews: The Salt Path by Raynor Winn, reviewed by Tony Bauckham



If you like books which illustrate the breathtaking beauty of England and specifically that countryside along the South Coast Path you will love this book. I recognised many of the places that this couple y passed through, and so, it was encouraging to read on.

A not so young couple is thrown out of their home of two decades by bailiffs. They have little choice but to walk and camp, surviving on meagre rations and meagre income. Why don't they just accept benefits and look for a home on the local Council's housing waiting list? If you read this book you will understand why. The couple follow their instincts and the book mixes their difficulties and joys throughout their incredible journey. Their initial anger gives way to understanding and their pain and raw suffering slowly ebbs away, comforted by nature.

For me the book has changed my conception of 'Homeless' people. So long maligned but, do we really know their background? The answer is no. This book reveals the prejudice towards and misunderstanding of homeless people. It reveals the manipulation of the numbers in our country through convenient

counting mechanisms, though, does not get bogged down in political discussions. We get to know the couple intimately, sometimes I liked them, other times they revealed an odd side which I disliked, though their 'Eco Warrior' images were downplayed somewhat which, I thought, was wise.

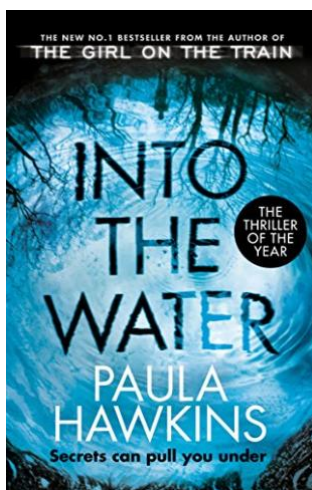
The book contains wonderful descriptions of nature along the path, geology, history, wildlife and people some locals, some holiday makers all displayed through careful writing and careful observation. These are interlinked very cleverly with human emotions and the couple's outlook on life.

At some points I was thinking 'not another Combe, not another hill', but, eventually the author draws the reader out of that feeling and back into the beauty of the landscape. This is cleverly intertwined with their difficulties.

There is a leaning towards the healing power of nature, activity and the power of action, culminating in the husband, Moth, still surviving today after a diagnosis of pending death.

I was drawn along the path with this couple and was sad, as they were, to reach the end of their path. I wanted to know more, as do many of their readers, judging from the unanswered questions which are posed.

Into the Water, by Paula Hawkins, reviewed by Maggie Weir-Wilson



'Into the Water' by Paula Hawkins is her second novel following her phenomenally successful debut novel 'The Girl on the Train', a thriller that was made into a hit film. This next whodunnit is set around a village millpond that has seen the ducking and drowning of witches, or inconvenient women, plus the more recent and troubling suicides of girls and women.

The plot of 'Into the Water' revolves around the latest suicide of a young energetic journalist obsessed with the drowning pool and its stories. The village, and certain characters in particular, are not happy with this exposure. Was it suicide or murder? There are, of course, secrets and lies to be uncovered before the truth is exposed.

The reviews for this book were ecstatic, and I must say the premise is intriguing, but for me the manner in which it was written got in the way of the story. It is, however, interesting for a writer to read a book written almost completely in first person, from each character's point of view in alternating chapters. Each chapter was unnumbered, headed with a particular character's name and quite short, two or three pages.

Thankfully, on the first page was a full list of the characters. Ten belonging to three families in the village, including the two main female protagonists, plus three outsiders. There were additional short pieces on the three historical drownings at strategic points in the book. I found myself turning back to the list of characters constantly at the start of the story to know who exactly was speaking which did interrupt the flow of the story and the tension.

The ending and the final solution were a little limp and felt a bit rushed, I wanted to linger over this and understand the motivations a bit more. It was quite a good read for the spooky claustrophobic atmosphere and the twists and turns in suspicion, but I think 'The Girl on the Train' was a lot better. Paula Hawkins will have a new thriller out in August called 'A Slow Fire Burning' which is apparently dark and disturbing, again with female protagonists. I wonder how she will tell the story, first person or third?

Book Quiz - Round 2 Answers

1. Jamie Oliver, and I'm willing to bet that almost everybody reading this now – and almost everybody they know – owns at least one of his books. The catchphrase is 'lovely jubbly', as also used by Del Boy in *Only Fools and Horses*.

2. William Blake, author of the much-sung 'Jerusalem' (aka 'And Did Those Feet in Ancient Time'), whose funeral was attended by only five people. Robert's teaching, it seems, came to Blake in a vision. He also seems to have spotted his first angels at the age of nine, in Peckham Rye.

3. Louisa May Alcott, whose family provided a safe house for runaway slaves when she was growing up, and who later campaigned for women's suffrage. Even more unusually for a woman of the time, she was also a keen runner.

4. Leo Tolstoy, who in his radically Christian later life managed to turn himself, after an agonising series of personal struggles, into a non-smoking, non-drinking vegetarian admirer of peasants – although he didn't always stay on the smoking wagon. Sex, meanwhile, remained a problem. In a diary entry of 1909, Tolstoy lamented its continuing temptation and wished that it 'could be instilled into people in childhood and also when fully mature that the sexual act is a disgusting, animal act'. He was 80 at the time.

5. John Updike, whose middle name was Hoyer because that was his mother's maiden name, and whose Rabbit books began with *Rabbit, Run* in 1960, continuing approximately every ten years from there. Rabbit is from Pennsylvania, like Updike – hence that interest in James Buchanan. *Couples*, a book about suburban adultery (like many of his others), remained his biggest selling novel.

6. E. L. James. In fact, *Fifty Shades of Grey*, *Fifty Shades Darker* and *Fifty Shades Freed* were Britain's bestselling novels of 2012 by some margin – and the same year *Time* magazine named her as one of the 'World's 100 Most Influential People'. The *Fifty Shades* trilogy, she later reflected, 'was my midlife crisis, writ large'. She also wrote Britain's best-selling book of 2015: *Grey*, which told the story from Christian's point of view.



E.C. Williams Short Story Competition 2021

Votes analysis:

Long List

The long listers all received less than ten votes and in alphabetical order are: Agnes and Lorna, An Uninvited Guest, Back by Teatime, The Hand That Burns, The Last Jab, Murder in IKEA and Reflections

Short List

The short listers all received more than ten votes, which means that they were voted for by between five and six members each, so you can see how close the voting was and how much it moved around as the final votes came in. In alphabetical order, they are: Ernie the Fastest Lawman in the West, Mavis and Raymond and The Verdict

In Third Place: From Depair to Hope, Nadil's Story

This story was voted for by five of our members, who all put it in either first or second place. Only one vote separated it from second place.

Voters loved the characterisation in this story and the way the story built in layers. Alongside this the final line was mentioned. Readers worried about Nadil and what the outcome of the story might be, so strong intrigue was built from the outset and this continued to develop throughout the story.

In Second Place: The Dough Maker

This story was a strong contender from the outset of voting and was voted for by six of our nineteen voters, so received roughly a third of the votes. Three of those votes were first place votes, which means that it was voted into first place by a sixth of our voters.

Voters felt this was a strong story that drew you in from the outset. It's characterisation, plot and use of show were all commented upon, as were it's use of humour and the multi-modal sting in the tail ending.

In First Place: The Runaway

The winning story received 93% more of the votes than its closest second place rival. Additionally, the winning story was voted for by fifteen of our nineteen voters. It received six first place votes, which means that one third of our voters put it in first place.

Voters mentioned the structure, setting and descriptive details. They felt drawn in from the outset and enjoyed the story beginning in media res. The characters were mentioned and characterisation was felt to be strong and the characters were memorable. People loved the heart-warming happy ending and the final line of the story was also commented upon.



E. C. Williams Short Story Competition 2021, First Place Winner:

The Runaway, by Tracey Robins

(Kentucky, 1958)

The diner counter was too high. Shiny-legged stools with green padded seats stood alongside, but no way could Joey make it up there. He dithered until the state trooper clamped a meaty hand on his shoulder.

‘Make mine a coffee, Len, and a soda for this young’un. Picked him up down along the road some.’ His voice sounded gravelly, full of dust from the highway. The meaty hands hooked themselves under Joey’s armpits, and his feet left the ground. He was positioned on the green seat, and the trooper took the stool to his left.

‘Kinda soda you want?’ Len, a thin, balding man, stood behind the counter, coffee pot in one hand, cloth slung over his shoulder. He poured a hot stream of black coffee into a white cup. A spoon tinkled around in the liquid, then Len pushed a tiny jug into view and the trooper delicately pinched it between thumb and finger, tilting it until a swirl of cream floated hazily on the coffee’s surface.

‘Want a Coke?’ Joey tore his eyes from the cup. Len leant on knobbly elbows, hands interlaced. Joey nodded. This was far more attention than he’d wanted – more attention than he’d had for days. A glass filmed with condensation arrived, a candy-striped straw bobbing in its depths.

‘I’m Sergeant Graham - wha’s your name, son?’ Graham flipped open a little notebook, and licked the tip of his pencil.

‘Joe ...’ Joey’s voice was a whisper. Reaching up to the straw, he sucked. The chilly fluid, tight with bubbles, burst into his mouth. He swallowed hastily, coughed, gulped again. His nose fizzed. Len grinned, a glowing cigarette dangling from the corner of his mouth.

‘Take your time, pal ...’ He wiped his hands on the cloth, flipped it back over his shoulder.

‘Joe ... Joe what?’ Graham sat, hand poised.

‘I’ll get in trouble ...’ Joey’s voice was high now, fright pencilling in the letters. He squeezed his eyes shut, digging his fingers into the chrome counter edge.

‘Why? You robbed a bank?’ The trooper laughed, a rumbling sound, and nudged Joey’s shoulder.

The boy’s hands clung to the chrome as he hauled himself back into the centre of the seat.

‘I never done that ... but ...’ He glanced at the floor and spotted the long stick, his bundle tied to one end. His shoulders sagged.

‘That belong to you? You taking a holiday, maybe?’ Len queried. He was chalking words onto the Specials Board. Joey’s eyes followed his hand – S – P – A – G – H – E – T – T – I. His Ma made that. When she could. He pictured a dish full of steaming yellow strands, coated with tomato and minced beef, oil seeping, cheese flakes melting. Darn it—he dashed tears away with his fist. Looking up he found a cookie on a plate before him. Len was back at the board, finishing

M -E- A-T-B-A-L-L-S.

‘I gotta get your name for my report, see?’

Mouth full, Joey stayed silent. Graham sighed and stretched back, shirt pulled tight across his belly, a broad leather belt holding everything in place. Joey was familiar with belts, but this one was polished and pleased with itself. A holster sat on Graham's hip. At last, Joey looked at the man's face.

'You gotta gun?' Graham returned the look. His eyes had crinkles radiating from the outer corners.

'I do.'

'You ever shot a man?'

'Nope. I been trained to, but never had to do it yet. Badge is usually enough to announce my authority. Now I don't see that I hafta use it on you, do I?'

Joey shook his head again.

'Awright son—I'll put 'Joe' for now. Where you headin' with your pack?'

Len's elbows were back on the counter, smoke drifting. Joey glanced between them, summoning courage.

'I's runnin' away. Ma needs help. Her sister lives in Louisville – I's gonna fetch her home ...'

'What's happened to your ma, Joe?'

'She keeps fallin' ... hurt her arm last week ... got some bad bruisin' ...'

Len drew deeply on his cigarette and crushed it hard in the tin ashtray.

'Wha's your daddy do?'

Joey's face crumpled.

'How old are you, son?'

'Ten. Can you help her? My Pa ... He ...'

'I think we got the picture about your pa, Joe.' Len took a box of straws from under the counter. 'You gonna do me a favour? Think you can fit all these into this cannister?' The tall glass and silver straw dispenser was just along the counter. Joey nodded, and taking a handful of straws, began feeding them into the top.

Despite his focus on the task, Joey heard Graham speaking low.

'He local? Seen him around?'

'Might'a—his ma's right pretty, if she's the one I'm thinkin' of, name of Elly ...' Len was wiping the counter again. That counter sure took a lot of cleaning.

'Think you could ...' Graham leant in, Len nodding. Their voices were too low now and Joey lost the thread. What did they want with his Ma? Joey levered himself off the stool, onto the floor. Both men's heads flicked round as he bent over his bundle. His shirt pulled out of his trousers, and the men exchanged glances as the weals on Joey's back were revealed.

'I think we're gonna take you home, son, and visit with your ma just a bit.'

Graham heaved himself off the stool as Joey's hand stirred the contents of the bundle, searching. He held out a small frame.

‘Tha’s Ma.’

Len peered at the frame. ‘Yep, tha’s Elly, Elly Harris as was—I know’d her.’

Joey’s finger stroked the picture. ‘Wha’s your ma’s name now? She married?’

Joey’s forehead creased.

‘I was at school with your ma—think she’d remember me?’ Len’s voice was kindly. The urge to pass the problems over to him settled on Joey like a blanket.

‘Married my Pa – name’s Landis. She in trouble?’

‘We want to make sure she don’t fall down no more—like you said, she needs help. You know the way back home from here, Joe?’ Graham asked.

‘Sure... am I getting in your car?’

‘Want to sit up front?’

‘No sir – is he comin’ too?’ In answer, Len opened the kitchen door, yelling,

‘Mabelle!! You come out front for a while?’

A large woman bustled through, slapping on a smile when she caught sight of the trooper.

‘Sergeant Graham! How you doin’?’

‘Just takin’ this’un home, Mabelle, mind the counter for me?’ Len seized his jacket from a hook by the door, which swung shut behind them.

Joey lived out of town, off the main road. Sergeant Graham wrestled with the wheel as they turned onto a potholed dirt track. Slung from side to side, Joey hunkered down. He knew what his Pa was capable of - the sight of this car would fire him up pretty quick.

‘Can you limp, Joe?’ Len asked. Joey frowned.

‘Like if I hurt my leg?’

‘Exactly—you catch on quick.’

‘Why?’

‘Well, if you’d hurt your leg in town, and we seen you limp’in’, then we mighta give you a ride home—see?’

The boy understood. He had an excuse. Pa wouldn’t know he’d run off. But how about the bundle? Len stuffed the contents into Joey’s jacket. Toothbrush, frame, rattling tobacco tin, knitted cat with one eye, all the boy’s possessions. He tied the cloth around the stick and stashed it beneath the seat. The corners of Joey’s mouth lifted – Len made it so easy.

As the car drew up, Sergeant Graham turned in his seat.

‘That your Pa’s car?’ A beat up red Chevy was parked alongside the house.

‘Len, why’n’t you take young Joe here, and go speak to his ma—I’m gonna look at the Chevy.’

As Len headed for the porch, a woman appeared, carrying laundry. She was slight, pale. Joey could see the bruising on her upper arms, and his chest tightened.

‘Ma’am?’ Len drew Joey to his side.

‘Joey? What you done?’

The boy, remembering, jogged awkwardly towards her.

‘He in trouble?’ The woman looked askance at Sergeant Graham across the yard.

‘Fell off the kerb in town, Ma’am—hurt his ankle, right Joe?’

Joey nodded. ‘Sergeant give me a ride home—said I’d never make it else ...’

‘A fine boy, Ma’am—had a chat with him in the diner. Sergeant got him a soda ... he helped me out ...’

‘I put the straws in the jar, Ma—and I got a cookie!’ Joey could feel Ma relaxing as he leant against her side.

‘He’s a good boy,’ she agreed. ‘Helps me out too ...’

‘You Elly Harris from Guthrie High School?’

Ma twitched her mouth to one side. Her eyes narrowed. Then she grinned – Joey couldn’t believe it – now that was a smile!

‘Leonard Mulholland? I ain’t seen you in years!’

‘I got the diner in town and—’

‘Who the hell are you?’ A sharp shot of a voice flew across the yard. Joey shrank.

His father marched up, red-faced, fizzing. Len raised a palm, like a man slowing a running child. Landis slapped the hand away.

‘I said who are you?’

‘Name’s Len Mulholland. I done brought your—’

‘What do I care? Get outa here, sniffin’ round my wife ...’

‘Mr Landis—I’d say that’s offensive behaviour, bullyin’ an innocent man.’ Sergeant Graham strode into Landis’ view. Joey watched his Pa deflate.

‘This your vehicle?’

Landis nodded cravenly.

‘Got a couple lights out,’ Sergeant Graham strolled towards the Chevy, Landis trailing sullenly behind.

Len turned to Elly. ‘Member your cooking – that spaghetti you done for the school picnic - ‘member that?’

Joey gaped. Was Len not scared? Did these men see Pa differently - a bullying coward? Was that what Pa truly was? Digesting this, Joey returned to the conversation.

‘My Mama’s recipe,’ Elly was explaining.

‘You wanna come cook it for the diner?’

Elly’s head snapped up. Joey’s too.

‘He wouldn’t like it—wants me here ...’ she trailed off.

‘I bet he does,’ Len looked pointedly at her bruised arm. ‘He’d like a bit extra money comin’ in, wouldn’t he? Joe could come too—after school, a’course, always got odd jobs... a bit of allowance for you, Joe?’

‘I’d see the both of you every day—could tell if there’s a problem ...’

It felt like a lifeline.

Sergeant Graham and Landis returned, the trooper tucking away his notebook.

‘Gotta couple lights out, needs attention that’s for sure—you get it fixed, Landis, I’ll be keepin’ an eye out ...’ Landis nodded, surly, arms crossed.

Len spoke up. ‘Mrs Landis goin’ to be cookin’ her spaghetti for the diner in town, Mr Landis – make you proud won’t it?’ Landis flashed a glance at Elly, who straightened and stared back.

‘See you tomorrow, Ma’am—Landis, you make sure she and the boy get to town safe and sound, y’hear?’

Joey stood by the car. Len passed him the stick.

‘No need to head to Louisville now, son.’

‘No sir!’

‘You be sure tell your Pa you seen my gun, awright?’ Sergeant Graham hit the gas and the car roared into life. Joey watched it lurch away.

Tomorrow he’d climb on that high stool by himself.



E. C. Williams Short Story Competition 2021, Second Place Winner:

THE DOUGH MAKER, by Bryan Webster

"Camera Four! Close-up on the old girl's hands as she beats ... Oh yes. That's good. Hold ... Camera Three. Extreme Close on her face. Show the effort. That's it. Good. Get the pain. Good. Good. Ready Camera Two. Pan to Brad. Yes. Slow Zoom in on his smiling face. Hold. Extreme Close on eyes. Wait for his wink. Hold. That's it. Now move down ... Slowly ... Slowly ... to his hand ... Follow hand as he takes lid off his Mixichef. Brilliant. Keep centred. Slow Reverse Zoom. OK. Hold on the Mixichef for three. Three ... two... one ... Yees!"

Jane, the new intern, was thoroughly enjoying her first day at the studios. She was watching and listening in the Master Control Room as Monty Mountbank, the legend-in-the-world-of-television-directors director directed his camera crews. Such aplomb. So purposeful. For Jane, the array of screens in front of Monty was quite bewildering, and the audio board below, with its multiple sliders and buttons and dials, was way beyond anything she had ever seen before. What a world! So many cameras, and so many angles on those two familiar figures and this wonderful set that she'd been watching on her television at home all these weeks and was being presented here. This was her first time in the master control room of a television studio and she felt she was at the very heart of a universe where the god-like Monty Mountbank seemed to glow with the light that radiated from those screens in front of him. Even though she was in her final year and was now applying for jobs near and far, this was her first hands on, as it were, in the real world of a real television studio. Her media studies course at the local tech college hadn't really prepared her for the intensity of the experience. This was, indeed, a taster for her of a world and maybe a career far more profound and exciting than she had dared to hope for. I would do anything to become part of this, Jane thought. Anything. Oh, if only ... If only ...

The show being televised was going out live and this was clearly evident from the earnestness and concentration of the team that surrounded Monty. Everyone scampered around him total committed, urgently and immediately obeying his every command. Here, in the Master Control Room, they waited, hands hovering over controls, for his barked orders while on the other side of the wall, out on the studio floor, which Jane could see through a window, the teams on the cameras, the dollies and the sound booms had become automatons completely controlled by the creative will of this maestro of televisual direction. Jane whispered excitedly to Dave, the assistant director, whom she was shadowing, "Oh, Dave, thank you so much for bringing me here. I love this programme, too. I've watched every minute of the series at home. You see it's of special interest to me because ..."

Dave cut her off. "No worries Jane." He leant over and breathed into her ear "Tell me, is there anything else I can do for you? I mean ... anything."

"Mmm, thank you Dave." Jane appeared to think for a moment, then said, "There's one thing I'd like to ask you. I don't understand why the director keeps directing the cameras to the Mixichef food mixer? He's been doing it all series."

"Product placement," Dave confided, knowledgeably.

"What?"

"Product placement. Monty's making a fortune from Mixichef, the lucky beggar."

It was the final of Champion Cook Live - a programme that had caught the imagination of the nation. Twenty million viewers. Advertising rates sky high.

"Oh Dave?"

"Yes, Jane."

"I don't suppose you could take me on set during the commercial break could you? I'd really love to meet the two finalists."

"Yep. Sure. I can do that for you, Jane."

"Oops, nearly forgot my handbag - I'll need that, it has my notes and stuff in it - silly me!"

At 78 years old, Lillian Jenkins, one of these two finalists, had surprised most of the viewers, and had cost the smartphone betting companies a packet, by making it this far. Wiping her hands on her floury, flowery pinafore she listened to Bertrand, the presenter, who had come over to her. "Ah, Lillian, ma chère. You really should not 'ave to put so much of ze, 'ow you say, elbow grease, into your whippings of ze mixture. What's wrong with ze electric mixer we 'ave provided?"

"Well, Bertie," she replied, "I can't be doin' with all that. When I started cooking you just couldn't rely on the electrics, so I never got used to using one."

Jane smiled at her and for a few moments left Dave to chat with the old lady.

The other finalist was Bradley Biggley, who had been the bookies' favourite right from the start. Confidence oozed out of Brad like the centre of a hot camembert. His handsome face appeared on all the television listings. And he loved his Mixichef. Indeed, during the series, shares in the company had soared like some out-of-control soufflé.

"So, Bradley, tell us 'ow it's going," Bertrand asked, after the break, while they both faced Camera One, its on-light glowing, while it held a Static Mid Up Shot of the two of them.

"Yo, Bertrand. A quick whizz with my Mixichef and I'm done." He picked up his half glass of Burgundy, gave another wink down to the camera, slowly mouthed 'thank you' to the viewers, raised his glass to Bertand with calm sophistication, and took a sip. Camera Two followed his other hand to Mixichef's gleaming on/off button.

What happened next was to go viral on You Tube within the hour.

The mixer did not spurt into action. It did nothing. The unwhisked lumps of chocolate lay there on top of the cream-infused-with-vanilla-and-saffron concoction, like beached whales on the exotic white sands of a tropical island.

“Camera Four. Back to Lill’s whisking. Quick!”

“Shit! Shit! The effing Mixichef’s not working!” Brad's voice boomed out across the set. “A whisk. A whisk. My cake needs a f***king whisk!”

Lill carried on mixing.

Later that day...

“Independent Television unreservedly apologises for the inappropriate language used by one of the contestants in tonight's Champion Cook Live.”

The following morning ...

THE TIMES Front Page Banner Headline:

LILLIAN JENKINS: OLDEST WINNER IN HISTORY OF TV COOKERY SHOWS

Below the headline was a picture of Lill behind her winning cake holding aloft her trusty egg whisk.

Business Pages Headline:

MIXICHEF SHARES CRASH OVERNIGHT!

Two months later ...

THE TIMES

In the column next to a photograph of the action were the strap-lines:

Monty Mountbank here seen leaving the Independent Television Centre after being sacked for receiving illegal payments from Mixichef during the recent series Champion Cook Live. A whistleblower newly appointed to the production company, Assistant Director Ms. Jane Jenkins, was commended for her courage in coming forward with evidence.

... and on the same day Jane Jenkins received a postcard:

Dear Jane,
Having a lovely time in Bermuda with
the winnings.
Can't wait for you to join me.
Thanks again for slipping me that wire cutter.
Love,
Great-gran Lill

E. C. Williams Short Story Competition 2021, Third Place Winner:

From despair to hope: Nadil's story, by Jackie Parsons

He sits by the side of the road at the entrance to the market. The regulars greet him. Some throw small change in his direction. Later, he will go round the stalls, begging for any unsold food. Perhaps they'll give him fruit or vegetables they can't sell. These may already be going rotten and taste bad, but it's all there is. His Mum will make soup. With his few coins he will buy a small quantity of rice to thicken it up.

On his way home, he hears footsteps behind him. He quickens his pace. 'Don't run away,' says an unfamiliar voice. There is something about that voice that he doesn't like.

'I want to help you. Show me where you live.' Nadil has no choice. He needs to get home. His Mum will worry, his brothers will be hungry.

He leads the man up the side of the mountain, he knows this path. It may be rocky and slippery but he is sure footed. Behind him, the man slips and slides and swears. They reach the house, or what counts as their house nowadays. It was all that could be cobbled together from the wreckage after the earthquake. The man has to duck his head to get in through the makeshift doorway.

'I've come to say what a fine son you have,' begins the man, charm personified. 'I met him begging at the market. Where is your husband?'

His Mum wipes away a tear. 'The factory he worked in was never repaired properly after the quake. The building collapsed on him and his mates.' She pauses as the emotion of the memory causes her to choke. 'His back was broken. After that he couldn't work. He caught pneumonia and died.' She can say no more.

'Look mister', Nadil interrupts. 'My Mum does her best for us. She earns what she can from her sewing business but the pay isn't enough.'

'How would you like to come and work for me in my welding factory?' the sickly smooth voice continues. 'You could earn money for your Mum and your brothers. They'll be so proud of you. Think what a difference it will make to them.' That voice. He hates the man already. He wishes he would go away.

'Son, would you be willing to go? You're big and strong. You'll be a good worker.' Nadil loves his Mum. He wants to do his best for her. He knows how much she struggles. He wants her to be proud. He wants to be able to earn some money, so she can buy food for herself and his little brothers.

He agrees to go with the man. With heavy heart he follows him down the mountain track avoiding the rocks and slippery ground, smiling behind his hands whenever the man loses his footing. These will be his last smiles for a long time.

The downward climb leads to the road. A white van is parked there. 'Get in', growls the man, all pretence gone now. He opens the back doors and pushes Nadil as he climbs in. He falls onto the metal floor.

The man gets into the front. He pulls away in a cloud of grit and dust. The van is going too fast for the rocky mountain road. In the back of the van, Nadil is thrown against the sides again and again. He knows he'll be bruised in the morning. He loses track of time. It's pitch black by the time they arrive. The man flings the doors open and pulls him out. Nadil staggers to his feet.

'In you go', growls the man. 'You sleep in here.' He shows him into a dark space. 'And give me your shoes.' The beam from the man's torch shines on a mattress on the floor. Nadil doesn't care, he just wants

to escape from this nightmare into sleep. He's hungry, but he's used to that, he often gives his brothers some of his food when his Mum isn't looking.

It's still dark when he hears loud rough voices.

'Get up, get to work', they shout. He leaps up, rubbing his eyes. 'Here' says one of the men. 'Get these down you and we'll start you working'. He throws him a couple of biscuits. Nadil eats them too quickly. If anything his hunger is even worse. His stomach rumbles. In the cold light of day, he can see that his bedroom is also the workshop. Rickety wooden benches, thick metal bars, tossed together in untidy piles, gas canisters leaning against flimsy walls. He almost jumps out of his skin as the saw starts up. Its whining noise hurts his ears.

'Get that bar up here will you boy!' shouts the boss. 'Thought your Mum said you were strong'. He struggles to balance the iron beam, and just manages to lift it on to the bench.

'Need more gas, over here now!' A shout from another man. Nadil trundles the gas bottle across the uneven floor.

'Ever done any welding?' shouts the boss. 'This is how you do it.' Nadil leaps back, the white light almost blinding him.

'Here, you do the next one'. And suddenly he is faced with metal parts, a welding machine, and expected to make the join first time. He has no goggles and no gloves. A fist hits him round the head. 'What do you think you're doing? That belongs to a customer. Don't mess up.' Nadil continues to do his best. Sometimes it's good enough. Other times not. He learns fast. Pain is an efficient teacher.

One day blends into another, filled with hard labour, and little food. He wonders whether the boss has sent any money to his Mum. He has no idea.

Winter comes, and with it the cold. Cold, cold cold. Never have his feet been so cold. Not numb, it would be better if they were. Through his frozen soles he can feel the chill of the gritty sand on the workshop floor. Metal splinters, cast aside during the cutting process, cut his feet. The boss still has his shoes. Why? Does he think he will try to escape? Where can he go? He has no idea where he is, nor how to get back home. But he dare not complain and risk a beating.

Night times are the worst. The mattress is stained and smells of pee, but he is so tired he just falls asleep exhausted most nights. The blanket they've given him is thin. He lies there shivering, rubbing his hands up and down his body trying to get warm. The wind whistles through the gap between the corrugated iron walls and the wooden gates, not that either provides protection from the bitter wind. His sleep is disturbed by nightmares, dreams in which his mum dies, leaving him an orphan.

Some nights the boss comes, stinking of cheap liquor. Nadil can hear him lurching from side to side as he makes his drunken way across the workshop, landing with a thump on the mattress, his arm heavy across Nadil's body. And then the touching begins. Nadil braces himself for the inevitable, stuffing his fist into his mouth to stop himself from crying out. It's less of an ordeal if he just lays still and takes it. Afterwards the man rolls over and starts snoring, leaving Nadil to his silent weeping.

In those darkest moments he remembers that afternoon when he came home from school and found his Mum crying. 'Where's Dad?' he asked, looking at the empty chair.

'He's, he's dead'. She can hardly bring herself to say the word. In that moment a dream is born. Nadil will become a doctor, so he can help people like his Dad.

It was this thought that motivated him when his new school was being built. There was no road up to the site, but Nadil and his friends worked with their teacher, carrying bricks up the steep mountain

paths, where the lorry could not go. He didn't care then that his hands got cut and blistered. That was for his school. That was for his Dad. But the cuts and blisters, burns and scars now, what are they for? Just to please the boss?

Exhausted by his memories he falls into a fitful slumber. The boss is always gone by morning.

This then is what his life has become. Treated like a slave all day, by men who are rough and cruel, working as hard as he can, doing whatever they ask but never seeming to please them.

One day, he is working at the welding machine. Loud shouts fill the workshop. It's the police. 'Stand still, don't move.'

'They've come for me, he thinks. 'My work isn't good enough. They'll beat me up, take me to prison.' He pushes back the tears. A torch shines in his face. Fear grips him. As bad as life is here, it's better than prison. But then, a lady approaches him. Above the mask, her eyes are kind. She puts her arm around him. He weeps on her shoulder. Hers is the first human touch not made in anger or lust that he has felt for months. 'Don't be scared' she says, 'we've come to take you somewhere safe.'

She guides him away from the workshop, away from the cold, away from the boss, into a waiting minibus. He sinks into the seat. It's soft, a pale leather. He doesn't want to make it dirty. He has no words.

'We work with the police,' the lady is speaking to him. 'They had a tip off about that workshop. You look too young to be working in a place like that. How old are you?'

'Thirteen'. His tears begin to overflow.

'What time do you start work in the morning?'

'Five a.m.'. He wipes his eyes with the back of his hand.

'And what time do you finish?'

'9 p.m.'.

'That's sixteen hours' work. What do they give you to eat?'

'Something from the shop, snacks, biscuits'. The lady shakes her head in disgust.

They drive to what they call their 'safe house'. A male member of staff welcomes him. 'Come in. You're safe here. I'll show you where to take a shower.'

He lifts his face to the shower spray, warm water mingles with his tears. He watches as the dirt and grime of months cascades down his body. It swirls down the drain along with his hellish memories. He lathers up. The soap smells fresh on his skin, a balm. On the bench opposite, a folded towel, a pile of clean clothes. Putting them on feels like a reverent moment, symbolic of a new start perhaps.

He follows the smell of food to the dining room. Two other boys are already there. He sits down to his first hot meal in months. He tries not to eat too fast. While they are eating, the lady who came to the workshop comes and sits with them.

'You are safe here,' she explains. 'You don't have to get up at five in the morning to work. You can go to school and we'll try and find your family.' At the mention of school his heart lifts. His dreams of being a doctor might not be lost after all.

It's light when he wakes next morning. He keeps his eyes closed. This must be a dream. Beneath him a soft mattress, clean sheets, over him a warm covering. He feels clean. Let this dream continue. But sleep won't return, she won't welcome him back into her embrace. He wakes to the glorious realisation

that it's all true. The events of yesterday did happen. He remembers the police raid, the kind lady, his arrival at this house.

And deep inside something stirs. A little fluttering. Something he recognises as hope.



An Evening with Hilary Mantel – Guardian Live webinar – Review by Tracey Robins



I was lucky enough to get a ticket for this webinar on 29th April, to listen to Hilary Mantel discuss and take questions on the third book of her Thomas Cromwell trilogy, 'The Mirror and the Light'.

I loved the trilogy and found reading all of the books a totally immersive experience, having to resurface into the 21st century with an effort after being so completely plunged into the Tudor world. There were several other authors present, commenting and asking questions, plus the opportunity for

viewers to send questions themselves. Many of the queries revolved around the depth of research into the time period that had obviously been undertaken, and the way in which Hilary Mantel had seamlessly built this into her recreation of the Tudor court without it ever becoming cumbersome.

I thought some of her tips might be of interest to HWC, and so here they are, in rather less eloquent prose!

RESEARCH SHOULDN'T WEIGH DOWN THE TEXT, BUT SHOULD LEAVEN THE MIX.

Before you start to write, ask yourself two questions:

What kind of atmosphere do I want to create?

What do I want my readers to feel?

Think about the culture of the time: the religious faith, the class structure, the gender roles and make this culture present in every scene in the following ways:

- the ways the characters relate to one another
- the formal and informal language that is used
- the physical positioning of figures in the scene
- the dialogue
- the cursing
- the clothing of the characters – how do their clothes make each character move and stand?

Don't explain historical facts to the reader – let the characters bring them into the narrative naturally.

Seed information throughout – right from the start.

BE in the scene – LIVE in it for a while, and then write it.

Food for thought... Thanks, Hilary!

Dear Member,

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION

Firstly, thank you for re-endorsing my role as Treasurer for our Horsham Writers Circle (HWC), which I aim to serve to the best of my ability.

Following the presentation of the Treasurer's Report at the AGM of the HWC held 15th April 2021, it was agreed that in order to maintain a reasonable and sustainable HWC bank balance membership subscription would be resumed for year April 2021 to March 2022.

As we are not paying for room hire at this time, the subscription amount was agreed at the reduced rate of £10 (formerly £24.00 per annum). This will hopefully cover the year's expenses, provided that our meetings can continue in the virtual world of Zoom and can be hosted free by our members who already hold Zoom subscriptions.

Review of the subscription rate will be an agenda item at the next AGM in March or April 2022.

To facilitate payment of membership subscriptions, the following methods are offered:

- Online Bank Payment to
 - o Bank Sort Code – 776312
 - o Bank Account Number – 89352768
 - o Full Name of Account – HORSHAM WRITERS CIRCLE
- OR by Cheque
 - o Paid to HORSHAM WRITERS CIRCLE
 - o And posted to 9 Rowlands Road, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 4LH.

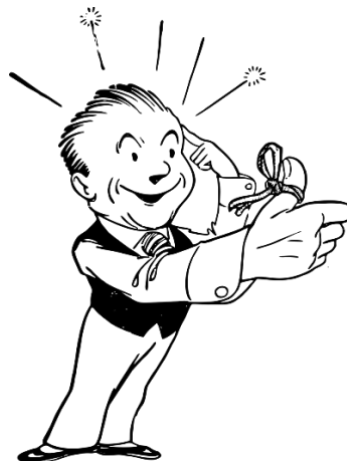
Please can I request that members make the payments at the earliest opportunity (remember that membership is a pre-condition of entry to the HWC's competitions).

Many thanks to all members for your ongoing support and for agreeing the subscription. I look forward to the continued vitality of our writing circle.

Cheers,

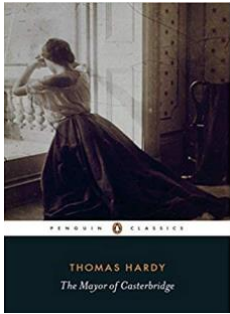
Clive Newnham.

HWC Treasurer.



June Birthdays and Links to the Author's Books

If you're looking for new authors, or to challenge your reading, then why not pick one of our Birthday authors each month. Follow the link on their book cover to search for this and other published work.



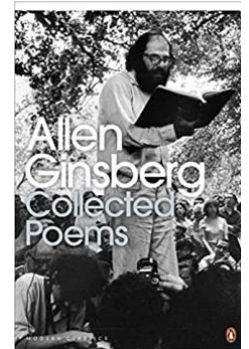
Thomas Hardy (June 2, 1840) – *'Time changes everything except something within us which is always surprised by change.'*

Thomas Hardy OM was an English novelist and poet. A Victorian realist in the tradition of George Eliot, he was influenced both in his novels and in his poetry by Romanticism, including the poetry of William Wordsworth.

Allen Ginsberg (June 3, 1926) – *'Follow your inner moonlight; don't hide the madness.'*

Irwin Allen Ginsberg was an American poet and writer. As a student at Columbia University in the 1940s, he began friendships with William S. Burroughs and Jack Kerouac, forming the core of the Beat Generation.

Ginsberg is best known for his poem "**Howl**", in which he denounced what he saw as the destructive forces of capitalism and conformity in the United States. In 1956, "Howl" was seized by San Francisco police and US Customs.



Nikki Giovanni (June 7, 1943) – *'There is always something to do. There are hungry people to feed, naked people to clothe, sick people to comfort and make well. And while I don't expect you to save the world I do think it's not asking too much for you to love those with whom you sleep, share the happiness of those whom you call friend, engage those among you who are visionary and remove from your life those who offer you depression, despair and disrespect.'*

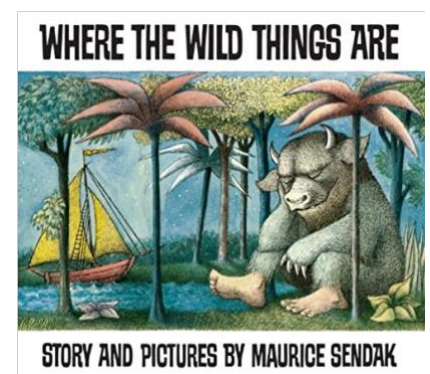
Yolande Cornelia "Nikki" Giovanni Jr. is an American poet, writer, commentator, activist, and educator. She is the author of more than two dozen books for adults and children. She has been voted Woman of the Year by *Essence*, *Mademoiselle*, and *Ladies' Home Journal*. She is a University Distinguished Professor at Virginia Tech, where she teaches writing and

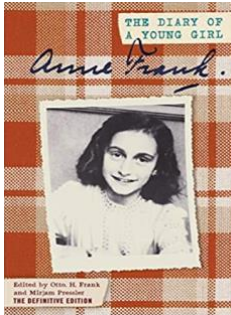
literature.

Maurice Sendak (June 10, 1928) – *'Why my needle is stuck in childhood, I don't know. I guess that's where my heart is.'*

Maurice Bernard Sendak was an American illustrator and writer of children's books. He became widely known for his book *Where the Wild Things Are*, first published in 1963. Born to Polish-Jewish parents, his childhood was affected by the death of many of his family members during the Holocaust.

While *Where the Wild Things Are* is Maurice Sendak's best known book, it's not his only notable one. Let the wild rumpus start!





Anne Frank (June 12, 1929) – ‘How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.’

The Diary of a Young Girl, also known as *The Diary of Anne Frank*, is a book of the writings from the [Dutch-language diary](#) kept by [Anne Frank](#) while she was in hiding for two years with her family during the [Nazi occupation of the Netherlands](#). The family was apprehended in 1944, and Anne Frank died of [typhus](#) in the [Bergen-Belsen concentration camp](#) in 1945. The diary was retrieved by [Miep Gies](#), who gave it to Anne's father, [Otto Frank](#), the family's only known survivor, just after the war was over.

William Butler Yeats (June 13, 1865) – ‘Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.’

William Butler Yeats (13 June 1865 – 28 January 1939) was an Irish poet, dramatist, In 1923, he was awarded the Nobel Prize in *Literature*.

The Stolen Child was written in 1886 when Yeats was only 21. It is the most famous his first published poetry collection *The Wanderings of Oisín and Other Poems*; and regarded as one of his most important early works.



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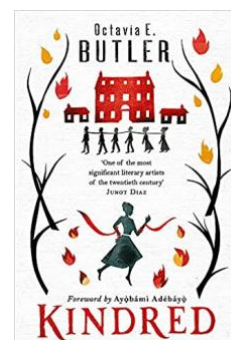
Joyce Carol Oates (June 16, 1938) – ‘We are linked by blood, and blood is memory without language.’

Joyce Carol Oates is an American writer. Oates published her first book in 1963 and has since published 58 novels, a number of plays and novellas, and many volumes of short stories, poetry, and nonfiction. She has won many awards for her writing, including the National Book Award, for her novel *them* (1969), two O. Henry Awards, the National Humanities Medal and the Jerusalem Prize (2019). Her novels *Black Water* (1992), *What I Lived For* (1994), *Blonde* (2000), and short story collections, *The Wheel of Love* (1970) and *Lovely, Dark, Deep: Stories* (2014) were each finalists for the Pulitzer Prize.

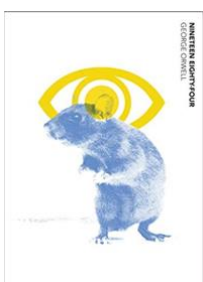
Oates has taught at Princeton University since 1978 and is currently the Roger S. Berlind '52 Professor Emerita in the Humanities with the Program in Creative Writing.

Octavia E. Butler (June 22, 1947) – ‘I just knew there were stories I wanted to tell.’

Octavia Estelle Butler was an American science fiction author. A multiple recipient of both the Hugo and Nebula awards, she became in 1995 the first science-fiction writer to receive a MacArthur Fellowship. Born in Pasadena, California, Butler was raised by her widowed mother. The first science fiction writer to ever receive the [MacArthur Fellowship](#), Butler transcended the conventions of her chosen genre, exploring issues of empathy, social normativity, self-destruction, conservation, and tribalism. One of the few women of color publishing in a genre dominated by white men, Butler won the coveted [Hugo Award and Nebula Prize](#) twice each for her novella "Bloodchild," her short story "Speech Sounds," and her novel *Parable of the Talents*, respectively.



George Orwell (June 25, 1903) – ‘The Revolution will be complete when the language is perfect.’



Eric Arthur Blair, known by his pen name George Orwell, was an English essayist, journalist and critic. His work is characterised by lucid prose, biting social criticism, opposition to totalitarianism, and outspoken support of democratic socialism. Orwell wrote two of the most famous novels of the 20th century 'Animal Farm' and 'Nineteen Eighty-Four'.

Author D. E. White (Daisy White – former HWC member and best-selling novelist)

West Sussex Writing Retreats



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***Maximum of 10 guests on each retreat.**

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July 30th – August 1st 2021

About Me

I'm Daisy, and I write crime fiction (cosy/psychological thrillers/crime thrillers) for HarperCollins, Joffe Books & Bloodhound Books as Daisy White/D.E.White. So far I have written & traditionally published 11 adult crime books, self-published 3 Young Adult books, and had 1 picture book story for young children published by an Australian indie publisher. My most recent books are published as ebooks, audiobooks, & paperbacks.

After switching genre, my crime books have been US and UK overall top 100 bestsellers, and I feel very lucky to now be able to earn a living by making up stories.

I've been round the block, up the mountain, and experienced the highs & the lows many times over! I tell it like it is, and I'm completely honest; whether you want to ask me about how much authors earn, what agents do, how publishers work, how many rescue chickens I have... I will tell you the truth. I share my marketing/PR/submission package tip, book sales & review tips on every retreat, and I'm always experimenting with new ways to get those book sales coming in.

In addition to my writing, I am also an award-winning serial entrepreneur, focusing on small business start-ups. I have championed small business at Number 10, Downing Street, been part of trade delegations,

taken the lead on various pop-up shop collaborations, and enthusiastically support Small Biz Saturday and Small Biz UK.

I love mentoring, and starting the writing retreats has been a dream for a few years now. I'm so excited to meet you, read your work and hear all about your own creative journey!

If you have a question I don't know the answer to, I will always do my best find out for you.

I'm rep'd by The Kate Nash Literary Agency.

You can find out more about my books at www.daisywhiteauthor.co.uk

Daisy x

Let's get started!

What's included in the retreat?

A sample day will run as follows and include a mix of creative writing exercises and informative workshops. There are some power point presentations, but we try to keep focused on writing notes using pens and paper, and a flip chart. We are very aware some people will prefer to take notes on ipads/phones/laptops so if that's for you go ahead. Every journey is different, and every writer is different and we want to embrace that!

Locally-sourced lunches are included, plus tea, coffee, water, biscuits during the day, juices and pastries on arrival on Day 1 and a traditional cream tea before departure on Day 3.

Day 1: ARRIVE

0815 Start the day with an optional gentle 30-minute programme of Yoga stretching to release tension & and spark creativity. No extra clothes or equipment needed. You are welcome to bring your own mat if you have one. Just wear nice comfy clothes you feel happy in (in fact this applies to the whole 3 days).

Juices & pastries available if you fancy a snack.

0900 Intro and Welcome

0930 -1230 Workshops split into 1 hour sessions. Tea, coffee, water and cake available all day.

1230 LUNCH – Locally sourced ingredients from our village pub The Crown. You will be provided with a menu at the beginning of the day, but please inform me when booking of any allergies/intolerances as they can be catered for.

1330 – 1600 Workshops split into 1 hour sessions.

1600 We finish with a leisurely chat/Q&A, any readings if you would like to get some practice in or bounce ideas off everyone.

You may then find a spot in the field to do some solitary winding down, chat with fellow attendees, or just work quietly in the marquee.

You might head off to take advantage of activities in the local area. These include:

Knepp Wildlands are ten minutes walk, and include a Yoga Garden, and guided walks and tours of the re-wilding project .

Local pubs include The Crown (five minutes' walk), The Countryman (an hour's walk, half an hour on a bike, or a ten minute car journey), The Selsey Arms (fifteen minutes car journey).

Please Note:

1-2-1's will take place on days 2 & 3 after 1600.

There is a variety of accommodation which can be booked locally, including Glamping at Knepp Wildlands, boutique country village B&B at The Crown Pub in Dialpost, or splash out on a Luxury Spa Hotel at South Lodge Hotel.

On Day 3 we finish with a traditional cream tea & a chance to network/continue readings etc.

The marquee and garden are open until 1800 every day and you are very welcome to stay until then, working, or walking, or (hopefully) just enjoying the sunshine and letting your mind & body relax.

Overview:

Day 1 – ARRIVE; Focuses on our creativity, releasing the pressure of everyday life and allowing us to find our voices in an uncluttered environment. This experience will be different for everyone, and workshops will cover writing the first chapter of your novel, beginning to use a mind map for general ideas, thinking about an author profile. Who do you want to be as a writer? Perhaps you already have books published but need to take a step back and think about your achievements and where your journey will take you next?

Day 2 – EXPLORE; Focuses developing skills. This could be how to get to and over the middle of your novel, or building on yesterday's sessions. This is also the day we cover the perfect submission package, including the dreaded synopsis. We will also talk about publishing options and agents, and discuss which might be best for you. If you are just starting out, this is usual information to have, and can give you the encouragement and boost you need to step into the writing world.

Day 3 – EMBRACE; Focuses on continuing to build your knowledge and confidence. Sessions on marketing your work/PR/getting reviews/further options. Today we will also cover the all important ending of your novel and how to make it rock! Finally, we will enjoy our cream tea and celebrate your achievements. There is no pressure to share your work and if the retreat, for you, was just about getting into the right mindset and realigning your creative energy, this is just as great an achievement as writing THE END on your novel. Embrace it!

*****We will have a one-hour Guest Workshop at every retreat. For July 30th-Aug 1st our guest will be screenwriter Hayley November.**

Q&A's

Where is the Retreat held?

In keeping with our English Country Garden theme, the retreat is held in a marquee in a field. There is parking available, but if possible we encourage you to share lifts, walk or bike from your accommodation. The retreat is held in Dialpost Village, West Sussex RH13 8NS.

What happens if it rains?

The Retreat will still go ahead unless weather conditions are so adverse we need to cancel/postpone due to our event supplier's advice.

Are there any toilets?

Yes, fully contained toilets are also provided by our event suppliers.

What happens if I book, but then need to cancel?

In order to keep costs and numbers down these retreats run on a tight budget. You can cancel up to 1 month before your booked date and receive a full refund. If you need to cancel nearer the date, for whatever reason, you will receive a rebooking form allowing you to join in with the next available retreat.

What happens if the retreat is cancelled?

You will receive a full refund if I need to cancel the retreat. I will not ask for full payment until we have filled to our minimum capacity, which is currently 5 guests.

What about Covid?

One of the reasons we chose to be in a field in a marquee is because we can take advantage of nature, and the fresh air. We will also make sure you have ample spacing inside the marquee, and provide hand sanitizer stations in the marquee, toilets and car park areas.

How much does it cost?

The full 3 day retreats are £499 per person. The programme is designed to run for 3 days, so (and we have had questions about this) you can't really dip in and out or you may miss opportunities such as 1-2-1 feedback etc.

Will you be running 1 day retreats?

Possibly in 2022, but again we feel the retreats are not just a day of information, but a total experience and a journey from Day 1 to Day 3.

How do I book my space?

Firstly, email daisy@daisywhiteauthor.co.uk to register. You will then receive a booking form to complete and will need to pay the non-refundable £100 deposit. The final balance will be due 1 month before the date of the retreat. If you want to chat about any aspect of the retreat, please don't hesitate to either email or ring 07973 864612.



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SHORT FORMERS



1. Describe a character who you might like to put into a story.

Focus on one (or two) key features of his or her:

- a. face
- b. clothing
- c. manner
- d. movement
- e. voice
- f. a small bit of conversation
- g. what other(s) think of him/her

You might then use the description in a scene that involves the character doing something characteristic.

2. Use a song lyric to act as a title for your story:

e.g.
I Heard the News Today
Goodbye Yellow Brick Road
Hello
The Real Slim Shady
The White Cliffs of Dover
etc

SUGGESTED WRITING TASKS FOR NEXT MEETING (17TH JUNE)

3. Technology. Write a story/poem/script that shows your thoughts about technology

