

Newsletter - June 2008

Reading Groups: please enquire at the shop if you are interested in joining any of the reading groups listed below.

VENICE - 2009!

Our third readers' tour of Venice will take place next May; the provisional dates are Tuesday 2nd June - Saturday 6th June 2009. This is a wonderful holiday made up of literary explorations of Venice led by two friends of the bookshop who live in Venice and are fluent Italian speakers. The format is that each day starts with a talk in our hotel about the main themes of the day's tour, followed by a gentle, guided tour, with a stop for morning coffee. Lunch is taken together at one of the many wonderful restaurants in the area of Campo san Stefano and is followed by free time for shopping, exploring or resting. Group members often get together in the afternoons to take trips to the islands or to visit a specific church or campo. In the evening, we meet again for supper, and the chance to ask Anne and Michael questions relating to the day's activities. There is usually an optional concert one of the evenings.

We stay in a hotel a minute's walk from Anne and Michael's apartment, close to the Accademia Bridge, in a very quiet and beautiful part of Venice. The tour includes accommodation in a single room, with breakfast, morning coffee, lunch and supper, and three days worth of travel on the vaporetti. You can make your own travel arrangements, or travel by shared taxi from Much Wenlock, to East Midlands Airport and forward to Marco Polo airport, and back again. If travelling independently, we can arrange for you to be met at Marco Polo and escorted to our hotel.

For details, and for information on booking and payment (which can be by instalments) please contact me at the bookshop. Final bookings by October please, but be aware this trip books very quickly! If you would like to read an account of our first trip to Venice visit our blog at:

<http://wenlockbooks.blogspot.com/2006/11/readers-trip-to-venice.html>



Alternative Booker Shortlist

Well, one of our chosen books made it to the official shortlist. *Disgrace*, by JM Coetzee ~ which so far, is looking like the one to get our vote. It's a brilliant book: a very uncomfortable read, but so well done. The disgrace which permeates the book is that of South Africa under apartheid; everything springs from this and refers back to it. It gets under your skin and stays there!



We've still to discuss Pat Barker's *The Ghost Road* and Nadine Gordimer's *The Conservationist*, and we will look briefly at *The Siege of Krishnapur* (Farrell); *Midnight's Children* (Rushdie) and *Oscar and Lucinda* (Carey) before casting our vote for the Best of the Booker in time for the national decision on July 8th.



The Morville Hours by Katherine Swift

is now my best-selling book ever, having over taken JK Rowling's *Harry Potter*!

We held the official launch for *The Morville Hours* at Morville Hall on Friday May 31st. It was a beautiful evening - we were extremely lucky with the weather - and we all enjoyed Katherine's lovely garden, the Douglas's beautiful home, and each other's company. Thanks to Bloomsbury for supplying plenty of bubbly for our celebrations! (See more pictures on the blog!)

We are also holding a Strawberry Tea at The Dower House on June 22nd (now fully booked) and a Creative Writing Workshop and Picnic Tea for our Children's Reading Group on June 27th.

As all of these events are selling out quickly, please let me know if you would like to be invited to any future events we may hold with Katherine.

The Radio 4 Book of the Week recording of the *Morville Hours* was simply gorgeous: the Gregorian Chant was from *Officium* by Jan Garbarek and is available on CD at the bookshop.





How Fiction Works

Our weekly seminars have now finished, and were greatly enjoyed by everyone. Betty James has agreed to run the course again in the autumn - hurrah! The main text is *How Fiction Works* by James Wood, and you will also need to read *The Good Soldier* by Ford Maddox Ford: you should have your own copies of these two titles. Do let me know if you would like to attend; the group is about half full already. Dates are as follows; October 7th; 14th; 21st; November 4th; 11th; 18th and 23rd. All Tuesdays, 2 - 3pm. £2.00.

Reading for Pleasure

Mansfield Park by Jane Austen: Wednesday June 4th at 2pm and Wednesday June 18th at 7pm.

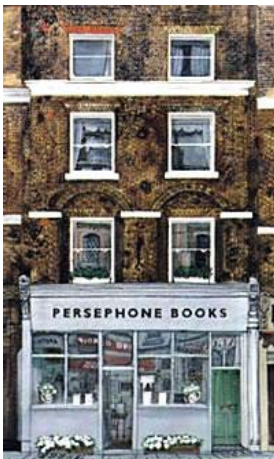
A Woman's Place by Ruth Adam is our Persephone book this month, on Wednesday June 18th at 2pm and Wednesday June 25th at 7pm.

Roar, Bull, Roar by Andrew Fusek Peters and Polly Peters: Children's Reading Group on Friday June 13th. The authors will be joining the children for what is sure to be a lively discussion! Next month, the children will meet on July 4th to discuss *Storm Runners* with author, Barbara Mitchellhill.



Wenlock Festival

June 11th Wenlock Books presents the World Premiere Book Launch of John Ruskin, Henry James and *The Shropshire Lads* by Cynthia Gamble. At 2pm in Holy Trinity Church. Afternoon tea and a short talk. No charge. Books will be for sale and Dr. Cynthia Gamble will be signing copies. All welcome.



June 20th An Evening with Persephone Books.

Founder of Persephone Books, Nicola Beauman, will be launching her new "Persephone Classics" at Acton Round House, courtesy of Huw and Sue Kennedy. We will serve Pimms and smoked salmon sandwiches. £10.00 Tickets available from the bookshop, from Penny Farthing and via the on-line booking facility on the festival website:
www.muchwenlockfestival.co.uk Nearly sold out!

June 21st 10 - 4 in the Priory Hall

There will be a Book Fair in Priory Hall on the 21st June, for all those out of print and scarce books.

14th September The Atonement Tour

...at Stokesay Court 2.30pm
This trip is now fully booked.

Poetry Appreciation

Future dates are June 6th, September 26th and December 5th. We are also holding a "second stream" of meetings on the following dates: June 27th, October 17th and January 9th for people who haven't yet attended a meeting, or who can't attend any of the first stream. 7 - 10pm in Little Wenlock. More details from the bookshop.

Arthur by Lesley Durbin

Little Acorns, the Montessori Nursery Group in Morville will be catching the bus to Wenlock on June 11th to come to a story-time session with Lesley.



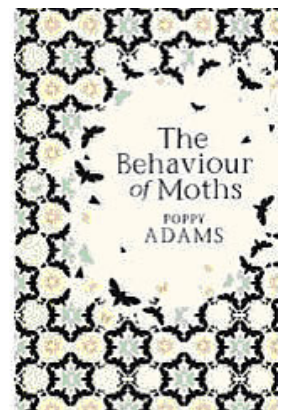
Clungunford Open Gardens

The village gardens will be open on the weekend of June 14th and 15th from 2 - 6pm. Lots of lovely gardens to visit, cream teas, ice-creams; bric-a-brac and a Book Festival with local authors, including Manda Scott, author of the fabulous Boudica series, Toby Neal - Shropshire since 1900, and Judy Smith, Shropshire Tea Shop Walks.



In July: First-time author Poppy Adams

will visit Much Wenlock to talk about her highly acclaimed novel *The Behaviour of Moths*. This event will be held at The Guild Hall on Friday July 4th at 7pm and tickets are £8.00, to include a glass of wine and £3 off the book.



Paddington Bear is 50 years old!!

Come and celebrate Paddington's birthday! There will be a special Paddington Story-Time for all Paddington fans on Saturday July 12th at 11 o'clock and again at 3 o'clock. Fun things to do, goodies to give away, balloons and special Paddington face-painting! If you have a battered old suitcase bring it along (with a label with your name on it to create an on-the-spot window display; the best one will win a jar of marmalade! Also, any Paddington Bears will be given a very special welcome!

Anna