

## Newsletter – November / December 2008

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



### **Catching up.**

November 1st was the *fifth anniversary* of my taking ownership of the bookshop. We had a lovely day, celebrating with lots of bottles of bubbly, a delicious cake (thanks, Tina!), balloons outside the front door - and lots of visitors! Many thanks to everyone who called in - here's to the next however many years!!



On October 18th, **Helen Wendy Cooper** was in the shop promoting her latest book for pre-schoolers; *Silly Samuel Square*. All the children who visited enjoyed meeting Helen and had a good time with lots of colouring in and fun. Helen's books fill a bit of a gap in the children's book market by concentrating on different shapes - helping children to learn about various shapes while having fun; our local pre-school/nursery leader gave it the thumbs up!

<http://wenlockbooks.blogspot.com/2008/10/helen-wendy-cooper-shapeland-books.html>



I had a good time at the **Birmingham Book Festival** at the end of October. Carol Ann Duffy's hour long reading from her poetry was moving and inspirational - we are still hoping that she will come to visit Wenlock next year. I heard a fascinating lecture from Ray Tallis about what goes on inside our heads and that was followed by a performance from Louis de Bernieres. I say performance because instead of the usual book signing, Louis read extracts from his latest book interspersed with music related to the text. He plays a variety of instruments, but the highlight for me was the very first piece he played which was from eastern Europe - a tune called *Biserka Bojarka* which I just happened to know the dance to! Quite by chance I was sitting

with another circle dance teacher so the two of us got up and danced! Louis said afterwards that it was the first time that had ever happened - I think he enjoyed it! Lastly, I attended a very thought-provoking lecture by Anthony C Grayling on why reading is important in society, today and throughout history. All of these events was very well attended and I really enjoyed being surrounded by other book-lovers - and the rest of the time I was completely seduced by Birmingham; canals, sunshine, good food, and lots of free time!



### Carol Ann Duffy

World-famous, award-winning poet Carol Ann Duffy will be appearing at The Edge Arts Centre on Friday March 13th. Tickets £10/£7. Early booking advised - this will be a sell out!

<http://www.carolannduffy.co.uk>

| Reading For Pleasure Group<br>(Meetings 2pm and 7pm) |   |
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| January 14th:<br>The Book Thief by Marcus Zusak      | July 8th<br>A Month In The Country by J.L. Carr                       |
| February 11th<br>Independent People, Halldór Laxness | August - NO MEETING   |
| March 11th<br>Minnie's Room, Mollie Panter-Downes    | September 9th<br>Consequences by Penelope Lively                      |
| April 8th<br>Notes From An Exhibition, Patrick Gale  | October 14th<br>Things Fall Apart, Chinua Achebe                      |
| May 13th<br>Orlando by Virginia Woolf                | November 11th<br>Lullabies For Little Criminals<br>by Heather O'Neill |
| June 10th<br>The Good Soldier, Ford Madox Ford       | December 9th<br>Mr. Pip by Lloyd Jones                                |

### Reading for Pleasure

November 5th (2pm) and 19th (7pm) we shall be discussing *The Wise Virgins* by Leonard Woolf. Our last reading group of the year is *One Good Turn* by Kate Atkinson on December 3rd (2pm) and December 10th (7pm). Our new year's reading group is January 14th at 2pm and 7pm, reading *The Book Thief* by Marcus Zusak. During the year, our RFP reading groups will always be on the second Wednesday of the month for both the afternoon and evening groups. [More on the website](#)

Our **children's reading group** is on November 14th - we are happy to invite Ann Turnbull back to the bookshop to talk about her book *Deep Water*. On December 5th we shall hold our Christmas party, playing the ever popular *Snatch* and *Bookchase*. We shall not meet in January, our first children's group meeting will be on February 6th and will be the first Friday of the month every month.

The **Blue Peter Book Awards** have announced their shortlists, and in the children's reading group we will be reading a selection of the shortlist (as appropriate to the ages of the children) and choosing our own winners! Overall winners to be announced on Blue Peter on World Book Day.



Also to celebrate **World Book Day**, we shall again be running our children's writing competition for Key Stage 2 children - more details in the New Year. March 2009 will be a busy time for the children as on 22nd we are going to see the highly acclaimed

performance of *His Dark Materials* by Philip Pullman at the Birmingham Rep. [More on the website](#)

*Persephone* kicks off on January 21st with *Reuben Sachs* by Amy Levy. We will only have afternoon meetings now for *Persephone*, so do join us every three months for a glass of sherry and a good old-fashioned discussion! [More on the website](#)

All information about reading groups, days, holidays etc; please go to the [website](#) or call in to the shop - all welcome!



## Christmas

Please see [October's newsletter](#) for more information.

Our *Night Before Christmas* event is now almost full (two places left at time of writing).

Wenlock's Christmas Fair will take place on Saturday December 6th - it's a lovely day in the town full of great things to do and see. Here at the shop, we are inviting children to come in and write their letters to Father Christmas and to post them in our special, shiny red letter-box! We will also be serving our traditional non-alcoholic (delicious) mulled wine, and Fair Trade chocolate peppermint creams - do call in!

## New Year's Opening Hours

The shop will be open on Saturday 3rd and 10th January from 11 - 4pm. We will re-open fully on Wednesday 14th January, winter hours 10 - 5 through January and February, no Sunday opening until Easter, sorry.

*This, the bookshop's 21st year, has been a fabulous year full of wonderful events and every day miracles. As always, I feel hugely privileged to be sitting here in my shop in much loved Much Wenlock. As the country faces a down-turn (or whatever other euphemism you may wish to use) economically, I can only hope that a decrease in excessive spending may well lead to an increase in quality and care in our lives as we learn to re-evaluate the lessons and wisdom of the "waste not, want not" generation.*

*Wishing you all the very best for Christmas and the New Year, thanks as always for all your support - I appreciate it more than I can ever say,*

*Best wishes,*

*Paul*