



Summer is here – time to read!

Newsletter 2021/3

It has been a busy few months since doors re-opened in April: we held our first Literary Lounge since lockdown, we are through to the final round as "Best Bookshop in Sussex", and the exterior of the shop has enjoyed a facelift.

But most importantly, we've loved discussing books with customers, new and old, to service some good, old-fashioned reading habits!

Literary Lounge – Guinevere Glasfurd – 4th November

We had our first Literary Lounge since lockdown in June when Ruth Thomas visited us to talk about her engaging novel *The Snow and the Works on the Northern Line*. Thank you to all those who turned out at the Commemoration Hall - we felt the venue and the event worked well together and it was great to be able to get things going again. There are a few pictures on the website: <https://www.barnettsbooks.com/literary-lounge>.

So we are delighted to announce that **Guinevere Glasfurd** has agreed to come to visit Barnett's again, in the autumn, to discuss her latest novel - and best-selling success - ***The Year Without Summer*** on **Thursday, 4th November**. Back in 2017, Guinevere delighted us with a discussion of her debut novel, *The Words in My Hand* and she was due to come back in 2020 before events intervened. *The Year Without Summer*, which was long-listed for the Walter Scott Prize for Historical Fiction 2021, is an intricate novel, which weaves together six separate lives, from John Constable to a farm labourer, unknowingly linked by the effects of the explosion of Mount Tambora in 1815. Further details of the event will follow.



PLEASE VOTE!

By Friday 23rd July

Thank you to all of our customers for your enthusiasm and support, which has led to our nomination in the Muddy Stiletto's *'Best Bookshop' in Sussex* award.

Barnett's: our recent best-sellers

As it says on our current Barnett's bookmarks, 'Literature is the most agreeable way of ignoring life' (*Fernando Pessoa: The Book of Disquiet*).

We've been reflecting on the past few months, when there have certainly been times when a good book has helped to shut out the noise of the pandemic. Leaving aside blockbusters such as Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* or Richard Osman's *The Thursday Murder Club*, we've drawn up a list of recent Barnett's best-sellers. Needless to say, it's an eclectic mix!

Described as the 'perfect escape novel for our troubled times' *Miss Benson's Beetle* (Rachel Joyce) has been jostling for top pick amongst our readers with possibly the least escapist novel of recent times! David Diop's International Booker prize winning *At Night All Blood is Black* is a disquieting but beautifully written portrayal of one man's descent into madness in the trenches of WW1. Other contenders were green cooking with *One Pot, Pan, Planet* (Anna Jones) and Max Hastings' gripping history of *Operation Pedestal*, the battle to save Malta in 1942.

Readers have also stepped inside a world of crime with Pushkin Vertigo's re-releases of some of the greatest mystery and crime thrillers from across the globe. French master of noir Frédéric Dard has featured strongly with *The Executioner Weeps*, prize winning crime from the 1950s.

The biggest seller for children has been the lovely *A Song of Gladness*, by Michael Morpurgo, who needs no introduction. This richly illustrated picture book brings to life the beauty and importance of the natural world. Another favourite is *The Girl and the Dinosaur* (Hollie Hughes), a magical story with evocative and stunning illustrations which draws on the zeitgeist inspired by Mary Anning. New and hot on their heels comes *I'm the Fire Engine Driver*, a fun picture book putting little ones firmly in the driving seat!

But our biggest sellers by far in recent months have been maps and walking guides for our beautiful local area. The hard work of the Wadhurst Footpaths Society is recognised in the almost 40 copies of *Walks around Wadhurst* that have been bought in the last few months alone! The range of (rain-resistant) folding maps (focused on Wadhurst, though with other maps covering "1066 country" and surrounding local areas) and the large-scale Ordnance Survey-style map of Wadhurst Parish have also been very popular, as well as published guides like *Day Walks on the High Weald*.

Enjoy the summer!

Keep on reading (and walking...)!
