

Lewes Children's Book Group

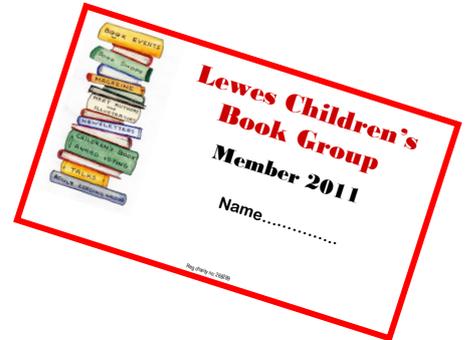
Newsletter Summer 2011

More Membership Benefits

Much Ado Books (8 West St, Alfriston) www.muchadobooks.com now offers members **10% off all books** (children's, adults, new and second-hand). And don't forget that Bags of Books, www.bags-of-books.co.uk gives members **15% discount**.

Simply present your **new** membership card when you make a purchase. If you haven't yet paid, do so as soon as possible to get the full benefit from your membership card.

A big thank-you goes to Much Ado Books and Bags of Books for supporting us in this way.



Poetry Workshop with Poet Sonya Smith.

Saturday 8th October at Southover Primary School, afternoon, times to be confirmed.

There will be two separate sessions for 8 – 11 year olds to encourage creative writing. £2 per child (children must be accompanied – adults will learn too!)

Numbers are limited, so booking is essential.

Email Jenny to book or for more information - jennymaidment@yahoo.co.uk

Book Review: The Graveyard Book by Neil Gaiman

This is a magnificent adventure story about a boy named Bod. He is abandoned by his parents following their death by the evil man Jack. In order to keep safe from him Bod lives in a graveyard and is protected by a group of ghosts, many who have died when young or following mysterious circumstances. From them he learns many skills of the supernatural including how to fade. Bod's world is described as crumbling headstones and a little church he even sleeps in a tomb in the day as he is nocturnal. Bod has many adventures including going to school and befriending a girl who helps to prepare him for life outside the graveyard .



I liked this book because it was scary and made me want to keep reading I also like the boy Bod he is brave, ruthless and caring a bit like Harry Potter I recommend it to all 9-11 year olds - younger children may be too scared.

By Guy Driver (year 6)



The winners have been announced for the 2011 award and local voters agreed with the countrywide choice of category winners:

Yuck! That's not a monster - picture book

Shadow - shorter story

Time Riders - older readers

See **Pick of the Year** Booklist for 47 more children's favourites.

Shadow by Michael Morpurgo was this year's overall winner. Christian Birmingham's illustrations enhance this topical story of an Afghan asylum seeker and a faithful friend.

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

Our next Book Swop

Will be on **Saturday 22nd October**, 10.30-12.30 at the Nutty Wizard Café (opposite Bags of Books on South Street) for ages 0-12+. This is a good opportunity to sort out the books that are no longer read and let your children choose something different.

Bring books to swop – no money allowed!

New Children's Laureate

Congratulations to Julia Donaldson, the new Children's Laureate – creator of so many engaging picture books (with her illustrators!) They are a splendid starting point for family read alouds, lured on by her speciality rhyming style, honed long ago in children's TV.

Julia has her own website, aimed at children:
<http://www.juliadonaldson.co.uk>

For more information about past and present children's laureates, see:
<http://www.childrenslaureate.org.uk>



Not yet a member? It's easy to join.

Download a membership form from our website (<http://leweschildrensbookgroup.weebly.com>) and send with a cheque for £12 (Lewes residents) or £16 (postal membership) to Diana Rogers at the address on the form.

Our aim is promote the enjoyment of and interest in children's books and we regularly organise Book Swops and author events.

The benefits of membership include:

- * Discounts at Bags of Books and Much Ado Books.
- * **Carousel** - a nationally produced magazine with news and reviews of children's books.
- * National Conference with the chance to hear high-profile children's authors and illustrators.

Adult Reading Group contact is:
Vivienne Macey tel 01273 478867.
The group discusses adult and children's books.

Our story picnic in May clashed with the grand opening of the Lewes Priory Park. We hope to reschedule a 'Box of Delights' event to celebrate story telling.

The Federation of Children's Book Groups National Conference in April was indeed a "Box of Delights". (See pages 4 & 5 of enclosed National Newsletter for two other views of a busy weekend).

Many of the 30+ speakers spoke of early influences: family, friends, storybook characters (Sherlock Holmes), T.V. (Dr Who many times!), teachers, librarians and meeting and quizzing writers and illustrators in the flesh at school and Book Group Events. Many of them work in other media to make a living – much cross-fertilisation is evident.

The internet is changing the ways people work and writers' websites invite interaction with their readers – some writers even nick children's ideas! Some writers do "ordinary" jobs to buy time to write or research. Serendipity is important too – Julie Hearn's cleaning job provided unexpected inspiration. New author Phil Earle wrote **Being Billy** after working with children in care – his passion and empathy evident in person as well as on the page.

Narratives are also important to writers of information books; married to accurate and detailed illustrations "non-fiction" books are a way in to extended reading for some children. Curiosity needs to be nurtured. As Viv French said "Google gobbets don't challenge – books can and do." See **It's a Fact**, new booklist for good examples to look out for.

Opening speaker, Carnegie medal winner, David Almond knew at age 7 that he wanted to be a writer – a storytelling mother and an uncle in the printing trade set him off, though it was many years before he discovered he could write for children. He claims that Mina from **Skellig** insisted that he write her 'back story': one answer to "where do you get your ideas from?"!

The closing speaker, Jonathan Stroud, had the good fortune to be a "Book Group child" and is sure it made a difference. He brought along a rediscovered 'box of delights' of his own. His mother had kept his early efforts at writing, drawing and book production and he became his 8 year old self!

Thanks should go to our fellow Federation members – all volunteers – who not only organise conferences and run the Red House Children's Book Award testing, but also speak up for children and books nationally whenever they can. Meeting fellow book enthusiasts help to keep me motivated to go on "encouraging children to read, enjoy and appreciate books." **Please help to keep books and stories central in Lewes life. We've come a long way since we started in 1974 but we need more members to keep the group going!**

Diana Rogers (Acting chair & treasurer)

P.S. Angela Macpherson (former owner of Bags of Books) sends her greetings!