

Evesham  
*Festival*  
of  
*Words*



2023

A YEAR-LONG FESTIVAL  
Main Festival Weekend

30TH JUNE – 2ND JULY

[www.eveshamfestivalofwords.org](http://www.eveshamfestivalofwords.org)

[info@eveshamfestivalofwords.org](mailto:info@eveshamfestivalofwords.org)



Evesham Festival of Words



infoFoW



Welcome to our 2023 Festival Brochure. The Festival celebrates words in all their forms. The main weekend, which is packed with events, runs from Fri 30th June – Sun 2nd July, but we also have events throughout the year.

Whatever your interest – writing, reading, poetry, author talks and interviews, meeting like-minded folk – the Festival really does offer something for everyone, with an exciting and varied programme at numerous locations in and around Evesham.

After the difficult Covid years, 2022 was a very good year for us and we are just so excited about our 2023 programme. We very much look forward to welcoming you to our Festival, and our delightful town. Please contact me about any accessibility concerns.

**Sue Ablett,**  
Festival Chair

**WORKSHOP**

**SAT 11TH MARCH,  
10.30 AM – 12 NOON**

**Poetry Within Our  
Architecture**

**Zoom event, £15**

Join Rhianna Levi for a poetry workshop on how you can be inspired by the glorious architecture in Worcestershire, with tips on how to use your surroundings to create poetry. This workshop will also give you an opportunity to meet new faces and share your work.

Rhianna is the current, and youngest ever, Worcestershire Poet Laureate. She is also an English teacher, and commenced her doctorate degree in education from September 2022. Outside her career in education and academia, Rhianna is passionate about mental health advocacy, the Humanities, and the Arts, and an advocate of prominent social issues.

**FRI 17TH MARCH, 1.00 PM**

**"No Man is An Island"  
- the Life and Poetry  
of John Donne**

**Holland House,  
Crophorne, £20**  
Tickets via **Holland House:**  
[www.hollandhouse.org](http://www.hollandhouse.org)  
[enquiries@hollandhouse.org](mailto:enquiries@hollandhouse.org),  
or **01386 860330**

John Donne was controversial even in the early 17th century. He wrote some of the most sensitive and moving love poetry in the English language but also became Dean of St Paul's Cathedral. He grew up a Catholic but converted to Protestantism in an age when religion and politics were so interwoven people were burnt at the stake for their beliefs. He gave some of the greatest sermons ever, with crowds queuing to hear him, but was forever conscious of his own mortality. As he said, "Ask not for whom the bell tolls - it tolls for thee".

Our speaker, Jeremy Holmes, has worked in advertising and higher education. Now semi-retired he is a trustee



of various charities. In his youth he won a scholarship and took a Double First in English Literature at Oxford.

**Two-course lunch is served at 1.00 pm (special diets can be accommodated), but arrive early to get a drink and enjoy the lovely house and gardens. The talk will commence about 2.00 pm.**



**FRI 7TH APRIL, 2.30 PM**

**80 Years of Desert  
Island Discs**

**Raphael's Restaurant, £15**  
Includes afternoon tea.  
Pre-booking essential.

Enjoy a classic Raphael's Afternoon High Tea (freshly baked scone with clotted cream and jam; finger sandwiches and assorted sweet treats) in the company of David Howe, taking us back over 80 Years of Desert Island Discs. Eight tracks, one book and one luxury. What would you take to a desert island? David is a popular local speaker. His talk 'Memoirs of a Book Addict' in 2021 went down a treat.

**Come along and support a local cause, part of Raphael's Easter Charity Weekend. Enjoy a great tea, and a fabulous talk – all in the stunning riverside setting. Tickets can also be booked direct with Raphael's.**



**FRI 21ST APRIL, 1.00 PM**

**Gloucestershire Observed**

**Holland House, Crophorne, £20**  
Tickets via **Holland House:** [www.hollandhouse.org](http://www.hollandhouse.org)  
**E: enquiries@hollandhouse.org, or T: 01386 860330**

Gloucestershire Observed – events inside and outside the county as recorded by inhabitants and visitors to the county in their journals and diaries. 500 years of human nature from coach travel to the driving test, marriage, crime and punishment, and problems with alcohol. Do we progress over the ages? This talk is based on 1,000 diaries from 50 diarists in the Gloucestershire Archives.

Tony Conder is a very popular Festival speaker, usually entertaining us with tales of canals, canal people, and railways.

**Two-course lunch is served at 1.00 pm (special diets can be accommodated), but arrive early to get a drink and enjoy the lovely house and gardens. The talk will commence about 2.00 pm.**

**TUES 9TH MAY, 7.00 PM**

**Producing the BBC's  
Antiques Roadshow**

**Cornmill Yard, £20**  
Includes 2-course supper.  
Pre-booking by 5th May essential.

With its industrial and arty interior and fabulous food, Evesham's Cornmill Yard is a great venue. Who doesn't love the Antiques Roadshow? Robert Arley's talk, 'Producing the BBC's Antiques Roadshow' – How 100 experts turn an unpredictable day of location filming into a smooth Sunday evening show, will shed light on this popular and long-running TV programme.

Robert is a retired television producer and director, and has worked for a number of TV channels. He directed 'The Antiques Roadshow', 'Flog It' and 'Bargain Hunt' over many years, and enjoys revealing behind-the-scenes stories from his "hairy" years as a broadcast location director.



**WED 10TH MAY, 7.00 – 9.00 PM**

**Poetry Evening  
with Open Mic**

**Zoom, Free event**

Back again for the third year running, we are delighted to welcome Beth Brooke who will host this year's event. Beth will be joined by guest poets, Sarah Connor, Sue Finch and Annick Yerram, for a wonderful and inspiring evening of readings and Open Mic slots. This event always creates a real buzz, and it is free to attend!

Register via email to receive log in details and to book an Open Mic slot:  
[info@eveshamfestivalofwords.org](mailto:info@eveshamfestivalofwords.org)



**WED 24TH MAY, 7.00 PM**  
**An Evening with Screenwriter Tony Grounds**  
**Evesham Rowing Club, £9**

Tony Grounds is a British playwright and screenwriter, described by The Independent as "the best TV writer of his generation". He is the creator and writer of BBC One's *Our Girl*, a British TV military drama series first broadcast in March 2013. Join us this evening as Tony talks about his writing career, the origins of the show, coming up with new storylines, dealing with fan feedback, as well as some of the other projects he has worked on.

Tony originally planned to become an actor until he realised he was very bad at it! Apart from *Our Girl* he has written two episodes of *EastEnders* and two episodes of *The Bill*.

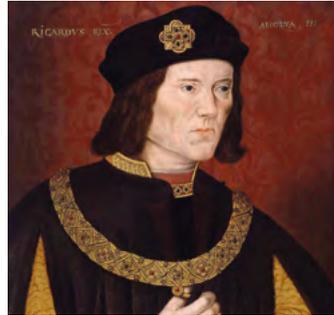
**WED 24TH MAY, 11.00 AM – 1.00 PM**

**In the Footsteps of Laurie Lee**

**Meet at the Woolpack, Slad, £14 (Lifts may be available on request)**

In 1994 TV Producer David Parker spent the summer recording interviews with much-loved author Laurie Lee, a man who generally did not 'do' television. David shared those lost recordings at a fabulous Festival of Words event in 2018. Here we have the chance to repeat a very popular 2021 event and join David for a special guided tour of the village of Slad, enshrined in much of Laurie Lee's work. Enjoy the stunning scenery around Slad on this beautiful walk, pausing at times to listen to recordings of Laurie Lee's own voice.

**Note: The terrain is uneven and there are some gradients. Please dress appropriately for the weather and wear suitable footwear. Why not stay on and treat yourself to a pub lunch after the walk.**



**FRI 2ND JUNE, 1.00 PM**

**Richard III: From Car Park to Cathedral**

**Holland House, Cropthorne, £22**  
**Tickets via Holland House: [www.hollandhouse.org](http://www.hollandhouse.org)**  
**E: [enquiries@hollandhouse.org](mailto:enquiries@hollandhouse.org), or T: 01386 860330**

The story of the discovery of Richard III in a car park in Leicester in 2012 is well-known. What is perhaps less well-known is the story of what happened subsequently. Described as 'The man Leicester Cathedral chose to bury a king', Revd Pete Hobson offers a unique perspective on Richard's final journey from discovery to reburial. For Pete, this was a once in a lifetime project. There was no precedent for reburial and the eyes of the world were watching closely. The subject of many books and a recent film, the story of Richard III is one that continues to capture the imagination. Pete Hobson is author of ***How to Bury A King – The Reinterment of King Richard III.***

**Two-course lunch is served at 1.00 pm (special diets can be accommodated), but arrive early to get a drink and enjoy the lovely house and gardens. The talk will commence about 2.00 pm.**



**WED 7TH JUNE, 7.00 PM**

**DNA Detectives**

**Evesham Rowing Club, £12**

Turi King is the expert geneticist on the hit BBC series *DNA Family Secrets*, where she appears alongside presenter Stacey Dooley. In this talk she will chart the rise in the use of DNA in genealogy and forensics for everything from tracing long lost family members to catching criminals. Her examples will include the first immigration case through to identifying the bones of King Richard III.

Passionate about communicating science to the public, Professor Turi King's academic research at Leicester University bridges the gap between genetics and archaeology. She is best known for her work in 'cracking one of the biggest forensic DNA cases in history', leading the genetic analysis that led to confirmation of the identity of King Richard III. This talk is the perfect follow on to the previous talk about the reburial of Richard III.

**SAT 24TH JUNE, 7.30 PM**

**A Novel Show**

**Bengeworth Church, £10 (Under 12's free of charge)**  
**Including interval drink.**

EODS are looking forward to being back in the Festival of Words for another year and performing again in this beautiful venue.

Many wonderful musicals have been inspired by novels. During this concert EODS will stage a selection of readings from the original works and songs from the musicals they inspired. From Dickens classics to Roald Dahl family favourites, all ages are catered for in this showcase of dramatic and musical talent. We look forward to you joining us for this exhilarating evening of entertainment.

**Tickets also available from: The Almonry Museum. Call in person, or T: 01386 446944 E: [tic@almonry.ndo.co.uk](mailto:tic@almonry.ndo.co.uk)**

**THURS 29TH JUNE, 10.00 AM – 1.00 PM**

**Literary Links: Guided Walk**

**Meet at The Gardener's Arms, Alderton, Glos, GL20 8NL, £3**

A joint event with Evesham Walking Festival. As we admire the stunning views on this 5-mile walk (grade moderate) you'll have a chance to pause awhile and learn something of the history of Dumbleton Hall, some of its literary links, including Mrs Gaskell, as well as hearing about Sir Patrick Leigh Fermor, who lived and is buried in Dumbleton, and is regarded by many as Britain's greatest adventure travel writer. Afterwards, why not treat yourself to lunch at the Gardener's Arms in Alderton, our finishing point.

**Tickets only available from [www.eveshamwalkfest.org.uk](http://www.eveshamwalkfest.org.uk).**

**THURS 29TH JUNE, 7.30 PM**

**Beyond the Asum Road**

**Studio Theatre, The Henrician, Evesham, £9.50 (plus 50p booking fee per ticket)**

Back again by very popular demand after a great event last year, we are delighted to welcome popular locals, singer/songwriter, Colin Pitts, and actor/performer, John Raphael, for an evening of words and song. 'Asum' is the colloquial name for Evesham and a local dialect. Don't worry, you don't need to understand it to enjoy the evening! We are delighted to have them back again for what is bound to be another fabulous, and unforgettable, evening. They certainly got the main Festival weekend off to a cracking start last year, and The Henrician's atmospheric Studio Theatre is the perfect venue.

**Tickets only available from: [www.henrician.org](http://www.henrician.org)**

FRI 30TH JUNE, 10.30 – 12.00 NOON

**More from the Family Tree**

117 High Street, Evesham, £9  
Includes cold drink and cake.

Featuring Sue Ablett, Galen Bartholomew and Noelle Chambers, and following on from last year's very popular event when they 'shook the family tree'. A year on we have all made lots more fascinating discoveries from our family history delving, and we look forward to sharing some of them.

Noelle will be talking about several family members who found their way into 'watery graves'; Galen will bring family history to life, sharing some of the pleasures from his latest family research; and Sue will touch on how she traced her Huguenot ancestry, and the results of some particularly dogged detective work about a missing family member.



FRI 30TH JUNE, 3.30 - 4.30 PM

**Confessions of a Book Blurb Writer**

117 High Street, £8  
Includes cold drink and cake.

Louise Willder writes book blurbs for a living with Penguin Books. During her career she has blurb'd more than 5,000 books. Whenever you venture into a bookshop, it is likely you will have seen something she has written, though her name never appears. She reckons that most of us will read – or skim – more book blurbs than books in our lifetime.

In this new topic for the Festival, Louise will talk about how she got into writing blurbs and some of the challenges. She will talk about her book, *Blurb Your Enthusiasm: An A-Z of Literary Persuasion*, in which she attempts to answer some of the many questions that arise while writing blurbs, drawing on the lessons she has learned as a writer of blurbs, a blurb, a blurbologist, or a blurbiste!

FRI 30TH JUNE, 7.30 PM

**Festival Quiz Night**

Raphael's Restaurant,  
£8.50 per person (Teams of 4)  
Light supper included.  
Pre-booking of teams essential.

Regular Festival quiz masters, Helen Yendall and Chris Cherry, return once again with more questions on everything from poetry and song lyrics to book titles and the meaning of words. As usual, the Festival's popular Quiz Night definitely has a WORDY slant! And Raphael's is the perfect venue. (Maximum of 10 teams of 4).

FRI 30TH JUNE, 2.00 – 3.00 PM

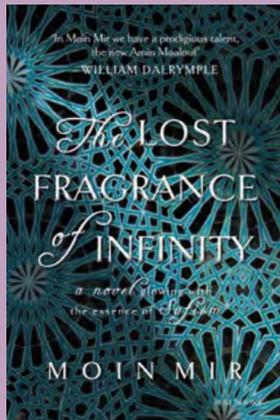
**From Exotic 18th Century Mughal India to Europe**

117 High Street, Evesham, £8  
Includes cold drink and cake.

Author Moin Mir was last with us in 2019. This talk about his latest novel, *The Lost Fragrance of Infinity*, takes us on a journey from exotic 18th century Mughal India to Europe.

It is the story of a tile maker who flees Delhi in 1739 after the Persian King invades and makes his way to Andalusia. The geometric Islamic tile trail that spans Mughal Delhi, Samarkand, Isfahan, Ottoman Istanbul, Cordoba and Granada (Spain) becomes his means of survival and it's through the restoration of these fabulous tiles that he restores his life. Finally in Andalusia the tile maker restores the tile work in the Alhambra eventually falling in love with a Spanish village girl. But Spain in the 18th century is deeply Catholic and the east-west love faces enormous challenges.

A Times of India 2021 Top 5 book, and described as a swirling historical epic in which craft, poetry and philosophy merge seamlessly in a story of passionate love, loss, compassion, psychological reckoning and redemption, *The Lost Fragrance of Infinity* is a celebration of human diversity and multicultural identities.



**WORKSHOP**

SAT 1ST JULY,  
10.30 AM – 12.30 PM

**Winning Words**

117 High Street, £15  
Includes cold drink and cake.

Want to write short prose that is a hit? Want to wow a judge or magazine editor? Join award winning fiction and non-fiction writer and editor Electra Rhodes for a session that focuses on writing fantastic flash fiction and super short stories that really stand out from the crowd.

Electra Rhodes is an archaeologist who lives in Hertfordshire. Since beginning writing in 2020 she's won fifteen competitions, been placed in seventy others, and judged a dozen more.

SAT 1ST JULY,  
10.45 – 11.45 AM

**The Perfect Couple: A 'Game Changer'**

Friends Meeting House, £8  
Includes tea/coffee and cake.

Jackie Kabler is a television presenter and crime writer. Her bestselling psychological thrillers - *Am I Guilty?*, *The Perfect Couple*, *The Happy Family* and *The Murder List* - have sold nearly three quarters of a million copies and been translated into eight languages. A former TV news reporter, Jackie is also author of the *Cora Baxter Mysteries*, a series of three cosy crime murder mysteries set in a television newsroom. Her latest novel, *The Vanishing of Class 3B*, is being released in May 2023. Jackie was last with us in 2018. She describes her fifth novel, *The Perfect Couple*, as a "bit of a game changer". Join us for an update.

SAT 1ST JULY, 1.00 – 2.00 PM

**Sherlock Holmes: A Man of Many Faces but Surprisingly Few Hats**

Friends Meeting House, £8  
Includes tea/coffee and cake.

This talk by Martin Davies is a light-hearted look at the great man's development over time – through film, radio and spin-off works like Martin's Mrs Hudson stories. Whether you're a fan of Rathbone, Brett or Cumberbatch, or if you just want to know if Larry Hagman ever really played Sherlock Holmes, this is the talk for you.

Martin's first novel, *The Conjurer's Bird*, was selected for the Richard & Judy Book Club, and sold over 150,000 copies. *Havana Sleeping*, an espionage thriller, was shortlisted for the 2015 CWA Historical Dagger Award. He is also author of the Holmes & Hudson Series, about Sherlock Holmes's housekeeper, with his publisher demanding that he expands that series.



SAT 1ST JULY, 3.00 – 4.00 PM

**Ladies of Blenheim – Lust and Laudanum**

Friends Meeting House, £8  
Includes tea/coffee and cake.

Blenheim Palace is one of the UK's most impressive stately homes. This talk provides an entertaining look at the lives and loves of the ladies of the Marlborough family – usually overlooked in favour of the men. Beginning with Sarah Churchill, the indomitable First Duchess, and continuing through the centuries with the adventures of some of her successors, this talk redresses the balance as it looks at the achievements of some of the women and discusses the thwarted talents and potential of other members of the Marlborough family.

Antonia Keaney first joined Blenheim Palace in 2008 as a member of the Education Team, later becoming the Palace's Social Historian and Researcher. She has made various TV appearances, most recently on Channel 5's *The Cotswolds* with Pam Ayres.





Photo by Ornur Pinar

SAT 1ST JULY, 6.30 – 7.30 PM

**An Evening with Sophie Hannah**

**Evesham Rowing Club, £12**

Rightly described as the ‘Queen of Psychological Suspense’, Sophie Hannah is an internationally best-selling writer of psychological crime fiction, published in 32 languages and 51 countries. She is also a poet, and a very engaging and entertaining speaker.

Her first novel, *Little Face*, was published in 2006. Since then she has written 12 novels in the Waterhouse and Zailer series, as well as other works. Two of her novels, *The Point of Rescue*, and *The Other Half Lives*, have been produced for TV as two-part drama series.

In addition to works of her own devising, Sophie has written a series of four novels based on Agatha Christie’s Hercule Poirot. Signed up by the Christie estate to continue the Belgian detective’s legacy, her first Poirot novel saw his first authorised appearance in a novel since Agatha Christie published *Curtain*, some 39 years earlier.

**WORKSHOP**

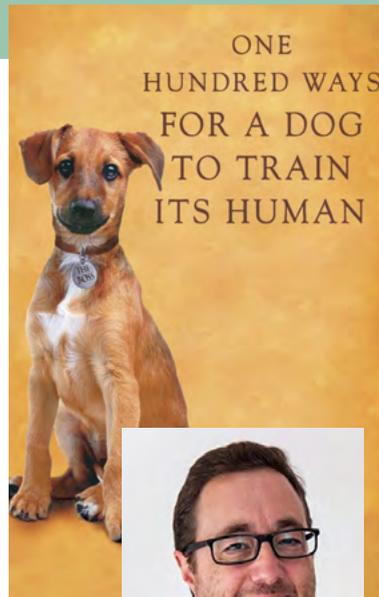
SUN 2ND JULY, 10.30 AM – 12.30 PM

**Creative Non-Fiction**

**Hampton Community Hall, £15**  
**Includes tea and cake.**

In 2022 Simon Whaley delivered a great workshop on Travel Writing. He returns in 2023 for a workshop on Creative Non-Fiction, which he says is not about making up facts! Instead, it’s about being creative in how we convey those facts. Whether you enjoy writing travel, biography or memoir, nature/landscape pieces, food writing or simply want to improve your journalling, creative non-fiction can transform your writing, and, therefore, your reader’s experience. This two-hour workshop will explore four creative non-fiction techniques that will make your true stories read like fiction.

Simon began writing in his early teens and after a couple of years saw his first published piece (a word-search puzzle!). Fifteen years later, in January 2004, he packed in the day job to become a full-time writer. He’s the bestselling author of *One Hundred Ways For A Dog To Train Its Human*, among other books, the writer of several hundred British travel, walking and general magazine features, and he’s a bit of a photographer, too!



SUN 2ND JULY, 2.00 – 4.00 PM

**An Afternoon with Joanna Cannon**

**Friends Meeting House, £10**  
**Includes tea, scone and cake.**

Joanna Cannon’s journey from junior doctor to best-selling author is both remarkable and inspiring. Leaving school at 15, and then returning to study for A levels in her thirties would be enough of a challenge for many, let alone then signing up to do a medical degree. She worked as a junior doctor before specialising in psychiatry, and then left the profession to concentrate on her writing career.

She is best known for her debut novel, *The Trouble with Goats and Sheep*, published in 2016, famously written in an NHS car park in her lunchbreaks. This was followed by *Three Things About Elsie (2018)*, and a memoir, *Breaking and Mending (2019)*. Her third novel, *A Tidy Ending*, was released in 2022. Her first two novels were both Sunday Times bestsellers and Richard and Judy picks. Together her books have sold almost a million copies and been translated into 14 languages. She is a regular panellist on TV and radio, and at literary festivals across the country. She was last with us in 2019 and we are thrilled to welcome her back to Evesham.



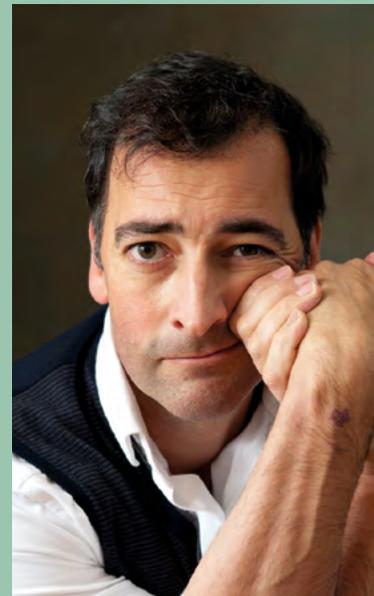
SUN 2ND JULY, 7.00PM

**Desert Island Poems with Alistair McGowan**

**Evesham Rowing Club, £12**

Festival Patron, and ‘local lad’, Alistair McGowan, is best known as an impressionist, comic, actor, singer and writer. He will be remembered to British audiences, and became a household name, for *The Big Impression*, which was, for four years, one of BBC1’s top-rated comedy programmes, winning numerous awards, including a BAFTA in 2003. He has also worked extensively in theatre, including appearances in the West End, and performed some of the voices for the ITV television series *Spitting Image*. More recently he has proved to be an accomplished classical pianist, with *The Piano Show* combining stand-up comedy, impressions and what has been described as “some remarkably sensitive keyboard recital pieces.”

We are thrilled to have Alistair with us tonight. An inspired and inspiring entertainer, this evening Alistair will talk to us about his love of poetry, and share with us some of the poems that he has treasured most throughout his life.



SAT 8TH JULY, 3.00 – 5.00 PM

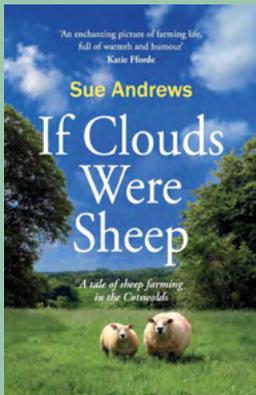
**If Clouds Were Sheep**

Harvington Village Hall, £8  
Includes tea, scones and cake.

Sue Andrews is the author of three popular farming memoirs about life on her sheep farm in the Cotswolds. She has even been dubbed the ‘Cotswolds’ answer to Amanda Owen!’ She has an incredibly warm and characterful story to tell about how she and her husband Aubrey followed their farming dreams. It certainly seemed an impossible dream at first. Sue was a horse-mad girl strongly attracted to the idea of farming. Aubrey was the son of a farm manager without land or money.

Sue recalls that it all started with Satan, a superb specimen of a black Welsh Mountain ram. Now internationally renowned breeders of pedigree Texel sheep, there are a host of stories in between.

**A joint event with Harvington Festival.**



FRI 13TH OCTOBER, 1.00 PM

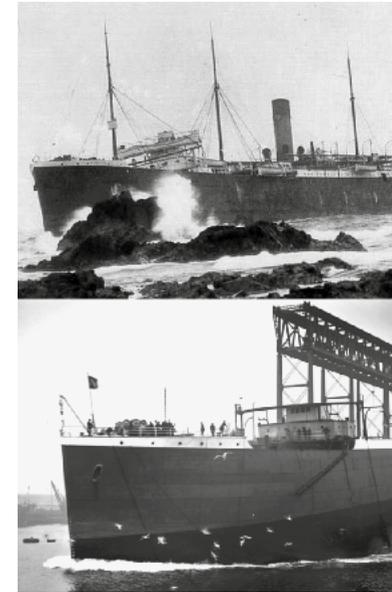
**SS Suevic – A Tale of Shipwreck and Survival**

Holland House, Crophorne, £20  
Tickets via Holland House:  
[www.hollandhouse.org](http://www.hollandhouse.org)  
E: [enquiries@hollandhouse.org](mailto:enquiries@hollandhouse.org), or T: 01386 860330

The SS Suevic was a steamship, built specifically to service the Liverpool–Cape Town–Sydney route. She ran aground in a storm near the Lizard Point in Cornwall 116 years ago, in 1907. It is a truly remarkable story. 456 people were rescued by the RNLI over some 16 hours with no lives lost. This is still the largest number of people rescued by the RNLI in a single operation.

Galen Bartholomew is a keen family historian. Two of his relatives were amongst those rescued. His illustrated talk will describe how he pieced together an extraordinary story - how the Suevic ran aground; the dramatic circumstances of the rescue; the salvage and rebuilding of the ship (in what was the largest salvage operation ever undertaken at that time); and the Suevic's final years as a whaling factory ship in the Antarctic, before being scuttled off Sweden to avoid capture by German warships. A remarkable tale of shipwreck and survival.

*Two-course lunch is served at 1.00 pm (special diets can be accommodated). The talk will commence about 2.00 pm.*



WED 26TH JULY, 7.00 PM

**The Great Train Robbery – 60 Years On**

Evesham Rowing Club, £9

2023 marks the 60th Anniversary of The Great Train Robbery, an event that saw the theft of £2.6 million from a Royal Mail train heading from Glasgow to London on the West Coast Main Line in the early hours of 8th August 1963. After tampering with the lineside signals to bring the train to a halt, a gang of 15, attacked the train.

Ian Boskett from Tewkesbury has studied the events of 8th August and the subsequent investigations and enquiries. Ian has uncovered some fascinating local connections with the heist. Some items connected with the heist, all supposedly destroyed, have quite recently resurfaced! So just how did the gang tamper with the signals? Ian will tell the story and give a live demonstration!

SAT 5TH AUGUST, 2.00 PM

**Bikes and Books**

Free event.

This event is a unique opportunity to celebrate a love of biking with a love of books. Join us for a 20-mile social cycle ride, starting at Evesham Velo Park and finishing at Raphael's Restaurant. Led by local cycling star, Helen Russell, this ride will pause in Dumbleton to hear about Dumbleton Hall and its literary connections, and visit the grave of Patrick Leigh Fermor, once described as ‘Britain's greatest travel writer’. On to Bredon Hill, we will stop for a reading of Housman's poem, *On Bredon Hill*.

**Ride in conjunction with Cycle Evesham Vale.**



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**Twitchers – Birds, Birders and the RSPB, with Mikron Theatre Company**

Raphael's Restaurant

Springwatch is coming to RSPB Shrikewing nature reserve. Jess, the Reserve Warden, can't wait to show the world this special place, with its amazing wildlife and incredible birds. But Shrikewing is not an island. From pollution and vandals to an overzealous mayor, Jess is starting to feel that protecting birds from human interference might just be impossible.

As we meet raucous rooks, booming bitterns and plenty of tits we realise the birds of Shrikewing are its real stars. Can Jess take inspiration from the RSPB's tenacious female founders and draw on its history of campaigning to save them? Can she find her own voice to raise a rallying cry for nature?

**This event will take place outside whatever the weather. Bring your own chairs. If you would like to have something to eat at Raphael's, please book direct. No need to pre-book for this event. Just come along. There will be the usual Mikron 'pay what you feel' bucket collection at the end of the performance.**



SAT 18TH NOVEMBER, 7.00 PM

**Mrs Churchill – My Life with Winston**

**Bengeworth Church, £12**  
Includes wine/soft drink and nibbles.

Winston Churchill is arguably one of the most famous Englishmen that has ever lived. His inspirational leadership helped win the Second World War, and his parliamentary career of 62 years ensured he was responsible for momentous decisions.

They say that behind every great man, there is a great woman. Was this true in Churchill's case? What of Clementine, his wife for 56 years? Did he bully her like he did so many other people? Was he as grumpy and irascible at home as he often was in the House of Commons? Given his strength and conviction, did Clem have any influence on him at all? Or was she the little lady at home?

All these questions, and many more, will be answered in Liz Grand's superb, moving, sensitive and informative portrayal of Clementine Churchill. (Liz's previous shows include *The Second Best Bed* and *Where is Mrs Christie?*).

Presented by [www.onarole.co.uk](http://www.onarole.co.uk)

SAT 9TH DECEMBER, 7.30 PM

**A Christmas Carol**

**The Henrician Studio Theatre,**  
**£11 or £9 concession (plus 50p booking fee per ticket)**

Don't Go Into The Cellar perform at venues across the UK, from theatres to manor houses and festivals. Their shows offer an original take on traditional Victorian and Edwardian literature – perfect for people seeking good old-fashioned theatrical entertainment! Their aim is to bring new adaptations of 19th century literature's greatest ghost and horror stories to modern day audiences.

Join the great Victorian novelist, Charles Dickens, as he brings to life one of the most famous ghost stories of all time, *A Christmas Carol* - a tale of revenants and redemption, hauntings and humbug, seasonal spooks and sentiment. Jonathan Goodwin stars as Dickens in this one-man performance, co-directed by Goodwin and Gary Archer. Suitable for 13+ years.

Tickets only from:  
[www.henrician.org](http://www.henrician.org)



**Six Word Story Competition**

We have run two very successful Six Word Story Competitions in the past and plan to run another in August 2023. The Competition was inspired by Hemingway's famous story, "For sale. Baby shoes. Never worn." And an example from our 2020 Competition: "Experienced time traveller required: apply yesterday." Competition Rules will be on our website in due course. Free to enter. Book token prizes of £20, £15 and £10 for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd placed entries. Get your thinking caps on!

**Launch date:**  
**Tues 1st August 2023**  
**Closing date: 5pm,**  
**Thurs 31st August 2023.**

**A Look Back!**

It was back in 2016 that the first Evesham Festival of Words took place. We were testing the water and it was a single weekend at the beginning of July. It went well! We had great feedback from attendees and contributors. People wanted more. By year 2, we were getting approaches from writers and others wanting to take part. We couldn't fit it all in to just one weekend and so we began a few 'fringe' events, just around that main weekend. Over the years we have continued to grow. 2020 was planned as our biggest year yet, and we all know what happened then. But with a mix of zoom events and online competitions we kept up momentum and have bounced back.

Over the years we have had some fabulous events, with incredible variety, and far too many to mention. We've also run a lot of online writing competitions. And we've linked with a lot of other organisations for joint events. By using a range of venues throughout the town and local area, we are able to showcase just what our lovely town can offer. We are all very proud of what we have managed to achieve. A big thank you to all our supporters.

Some of our 2023 events are selling fast. Don't delay – book now!

**Sue Ablett**



**Word Search**

The words listed can all be found in the grid – running forwards, backwards, up, down and diagonally – **except one**. For a chance to win a prize, discover which word from the list can't be found in the Word Search.

Email [info@eveshamfestivalofwords.org](mailto:info@eveshamfestivalofwords.org) with the word that can't be found. **Deadline Friday 7th July. One winner will be chosen from all correct replies. £10 book token to the winner.**

- |                |              |
|----------------|--------------|
| 1. Shakespeare | 10. Blyton   |
| 2. Dickens     | 11. Wilde    |
| 3. Rowling     | 12. Bronte   |
| 4. Hemingway   | 13. Vonnegut |
| 5. Orwell      | 14. Seuss    |
| 6. Woolf       | 15. Tolkien  |
| 7. Christie    | 16. Austen   |
| 8. Twain       | 17. Dahl     |
| 9. Conan Doyle |              |

**Festival Steering Group**

**Members:**

Sue Ablett (Chair); Galen Bartholomew; Noelle Chambers; Joyce Davey; Lynn Lucchese; Kim McGowan; Diana Raphael, Caroline Treadwell (Wychavon)

**Christmas is Coming!**

Our usual Christmas Quiz sheet will be out from 1st December with a closing date of early January 2024. Free to enter. £10 book token to the winner. Always good fun and will be available to download from our website at the end of November.

Evesham Christmas Tree Festival is going from strength to strength, and is a really popular event in the town, taking place through December in the beautiful setting of All Saints Church. Come along and admire our tree, and all the others, pick up a copy of our Christmas Quiz, our Save the Date Flyer for 2024, or one of our Secret Santa book gifts.

**Festival Book Club**

The Festival Book Club started in January 2020. Monthly meetings take place in central Evesham – lots of lively discussion and a very social group. The Book Club has proved so popular that it's 'wait list' only at the moment. But if you're interested in taking part, do contact Helen Yendall  
**E: [helenyendall@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:helenyendall@yahoo.co.uk)**

**Want to help?**

A Festival like Evesham Festival of Words is a significant undertaking, run entirely by volunteers. If you are interested in helping in any way, or sponsoring events, do please get in touch.  
**E: [info@eveshamfestivalofwords.org](mailto:info@eveshamfestivalofwords.org), or**  
**T: Sue Ablett, Festival Chair, 0787 1285606.**

**Festival Map**

1. **Almonry**  
Abbey Gate, WR11 4BQ
2. **Abbey Remains & Bell Tower**
3. **All Saints Church / Church House**  
Market Place, WR11 4RW
4. **Abbey Park & Riverside Walk**
5. **Friends Meeting House**  
Cowl St, WR11 4PN
6. **Library**  
Oat St, WR11 4PJ
7. **117 High Street\***  
WR11 4EQ
8. **The Henrician\***  
Victoria Avenue, WR11 4QH
9. **Evesham Rowing Club\***  
Abbey Rd, WR11 4ST
10. **Hampton Ferry & Raphael's Cafe\***  
Boat Lane, WR11 4BP
11. **Hampton Community Hall\***  
Pershore Rd, WR11 2PQ
12. **Bengeworth Church**  
Port St, WR11 3LF
13. **Regal Cinema**  
Port St, WR11 3LD
14. **Cornmill Yard\***  
Cornmill Lane, Cheltenham Rd, WR11 2LL
15. **Evesham Velo Park\***  
WR11 2BH

\* Parking available at venue





## A huge thank you to:

### Our wonderful contributors, audiences, volunteers, and Festival Patrons:

Local MP, Nigel Huddleston; TV presenter and comedian, Alistair McGowan; Editor Cotswold & Vale Magazine, Lynne Powell; Local author, Helen Yendall

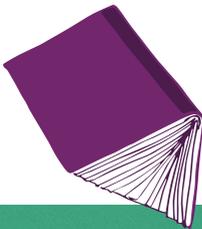
### Sponsors and supporters:

Abbey Appliances; Alison's Bookshop, Tewkesbury; Almonry Museum & Tourist Information Centre; Cornmill Yard; Cotswold & Vale Magazine; Councillor Peter Griffiths; Cycle Evesham Vale; Evesham Journal; Evesham Library; Friends of Evesham Festival of Words; A Friend of St Richard's Hospice; Raphael's Restaurant; T Stanberry-Flynn; The Henrician; Undervale Ltd; Vale Press Ltd.

**Festival brochure design:** Kitty Kovacevic

**Printing and production:** Vale Press Ltd

### Major Sponsors:



Scan for more festival info

## Where to Buy Tickets



[eveshamfestivalofwords.org](https://eveshamfestivalofwords.org)  
(Payments Via PayPal)



20 Allardene, Evesham,  
Worcestershire, WR11 1EA

Cheques payable to  
'Evesham Festival of Words'.  
Please include full contact details.



SUE ABLETT  
[info@eveshamfestivalofwords.org](mailto:info@eveshamfestivalofwords.org)  
0787 128 5606

Note that we will not be printing tickets this year but confirmation will be given for all ticket purchases, and your name will be on the Event listing. Some events may sell out quickly. Check website for latest status.