

VANESSA M. TANNER

NEWSLETTER - 30TH JUNE 2025

DEPUTY MAYOR DUTIES

In my new role as Deputy Mayor of Devizes, I attended the Marlborough Mayor Robing. It was a formal event and quite emotional for the outgoing and incoming Mayors, both women. It seems to be a trend in Wiltshire as I met two other female Deputies of towns where the Mayors are women.

I was also privileged to attend a Volunteer Celebration for Homestart, a charity which supports struggling parents. It was lovely to hear about the relationships between volunteers and families.



Find out more about Homestart:

<https://www.home-start.org.uk/>

MY FIRST BOOK FESTIVAL APPEARANCE

When a friend of a friend asked me if I would like to give a presentation at the Warminster Book Festival on 7th June, of course I jumped at the chance.



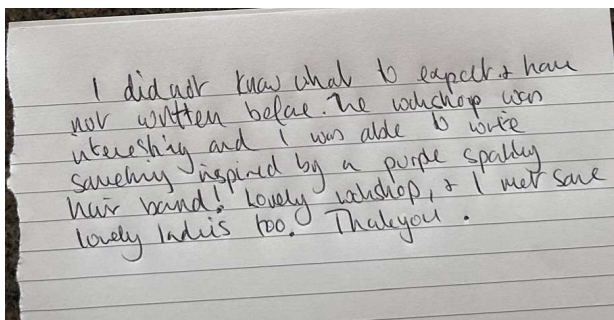
What a great opportunity for me, as a new author, to showcase *The Barmouth Affairs*. I chose to focus on the themes in the story and called my talk 'Family, Friendship and Fidelity'. Researching the topics was fascinating and I discovered so much about family and friendship theory as well as some interesting facts and figures about (in)fidelity.

Driving over on Saturday in the wind and rain, I thought nobody would come out in such miserable weather and I'd have no audience. I needn't have worried: about thirty people turned up and the applause indicated that they appreciated my presentation. A couple of them told me it's obvious I have a teaching background. I'm not sure if that's a good or bad thing! Whatever it was, that's the first one under my belt and I look forward to more in the future.

Thinking about publishing your book? Have a chat with Jonathan Posner at Winter and Drew.

jonathan@winteranddrew.com





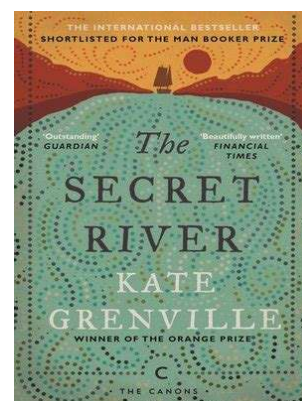
CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP

Last week Rob, Elaine and I, all members of Devizes Writers' Group, ran a creative writing workshop as part of Devizes Arts Festival. We're a busy lot in this small market town in Wiltshire!

To begin with, there were envelopes of small items, such as a key, a train ticket or a hairband to inspire a plot. There was a lot of chatter in the room as ideas were shared and bounced around. Then, there was an opportunity to create a character followed by setting. Breaktime was a chance to discuss ideas, writing projects and poetry. There were also some extracts from novels and short stories, by both famous, and not-so-famous, authors for everyone to read and discuss. In the end, all the attendees were able to let their imaginations run wild and everyone went away with a piece of writing. The feedback was positive, including this lovely note above.

WHAT I'M READING

The Secret River by Kate Grenville is set in the early 1800s when 'criminals' from London were deported to Australia. Once there, they could work towards their freedom and settle on certain tracts of land. Unfortunately, this caused inevitable difficulties between the Aboriginal people who already lived on that land, which was their home and source of their food. The story follows a family as they navigate these difficulties and attempt to build a new life for themselves.



AND FINALLY – MY GRAMMAR RANT

Do you know the difference between the past tenses 'have done' and 'did'? [Find out more](#)
It would seem that the present perfect is falling out of fashion as I rarely hear it anymore.

Have done – present perfect – used when an adverb (if used) does not specify the time.

I've (already) done it.

Did – past simple – used when an adverb of time tells you exactly when.

I did it two hours ago.

Is there a mistake, grammar or otherwise, that really annoys you? Please share it with me and we can moan about it together!