

The Handheld Newsletter

November 2019

Greetings from the USA!

Kate is writing this from a nice room in Princeton NJ, where she is (a little nervously) taking part in the Two Rivers sales conference, our new North American distributor, at the Nassau Inn. She'll be presenting Handheld's books to 40 of the Two Rivers sales reps, and they will be wowed, we hope. Eight hundred copies of Handheld's books are on their way from the UK to the US right now, ready for despatch in January. This is all quite exciting and hard to put into perspective. It seems extraordinary that we are already at this stage after only two and a half years of publishing.

Handheld has gone Pinterest

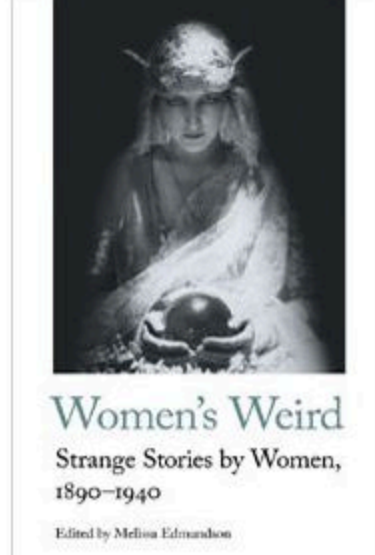
We now have a [Pinterest page](#), and boards for all of our titles in print. Handheld's Social Media Content Manager Kath had a lovely afternoon sourcing new and old images to pin to the boards. We had a lot stashed away as part of the production process, so it's good to have a nice exhibition site to display them in. More pictures will be pinned as we come across them. Do go and look.

Women's Weird is way ahead

Women's Weird is now reprinting, only two weeks after publication, and orders are piling up in our UK distributor's warehouse in Tonbridge because they haven't got any copies left.

This is a classic illustration of the uncertainties of the book trade: if we had only known that the wholesalers and big chains would decide to order in stock on spec, rather than just ordering what customers have requested, we would have printed more copies. Sending a lot of our supplies to the US on spec reduced our stores further. It's a good problem to have, but it's still a problem: it's aggravating not being able to supply the books that the booksellers want to sell, especially when we have 40+ copies in the office.

Orders for *Women's Weird* coming straight to us will be posted right away; but ordering from a bookshop may mean you'll have to wait till the end of November.



Neil Gaiman does it again

Friend of Handheld Press Neil Gaiman has kindly given us an endorsement for our new Sylvia Townsend Warner collection, *Of Cats and Elfin*. 'Sylvia Townsend Warner was one of our finest writers. I'm thrilled that Handheld Press are bringing some of her uncollected fantasy stories back into print to delight and amaze a new generation.' The collection brings together all her short fantasy fiction (and one essay) not already published in *Kingdoms of Elfin*; it's available for pre-order now, and will be published on 20 January.

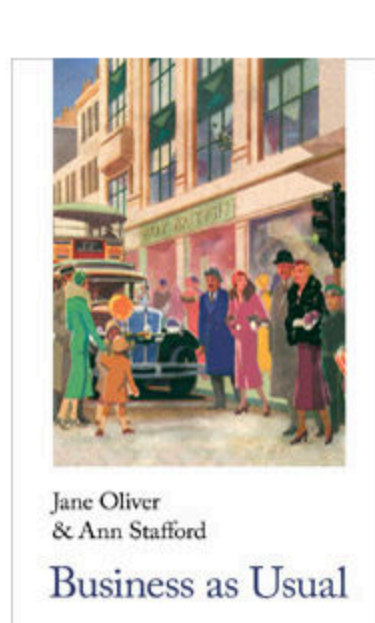
We also have a book launch for *Of Cats and Elfin* in London, on 16 January, but we're not allowed yet to say who will be the star guest, or where it will be. To be announced in the next newsletter!



Mr Selfridge says yes

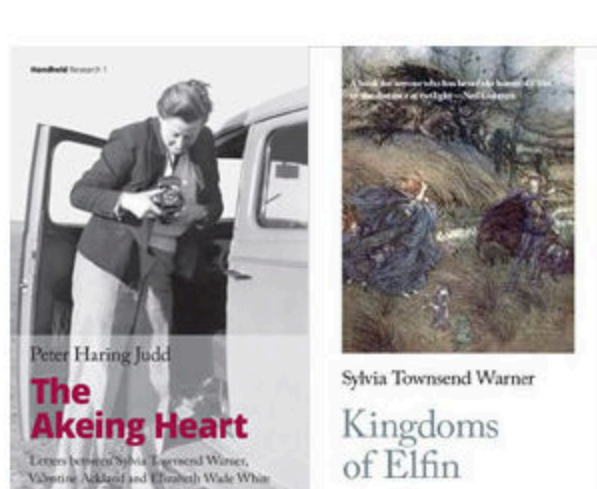
In March we're publishing *Business as Usual* by Jane Oliver and Ann Stafford, a delightful 1933 novel about working in Selfridge's book department and library. We think it could be the new *Miss Pettigrew Lives for a Day*.

Kate wrote the introduction, and while researching this she looked up the reviews for the original edition. Not only did Mr Selfridge himself endorse the original novel (we've printed what he said on the back cover of our edition), Selfridges also stocked signed copies for their customers that Christmas. Would that the present Selfridges would do the same for our edition ...



Birthday sale offer for our Sylvia Townsend Warner titles

It will be Sylvia Townsend Warner's birthday in December (she would have been 126). To celebrate we have created two interesting (as francophones say) offers. For the whole of December we will be offering a 30% discount (excludes shipping) through our website for *The Akeing Heart*, *Letters between Sylvia Townsend Warner, Valentine Ackland and Elizabeth Wade White*, by Peter Judd (that's £17 rather than £24.99), and for her *Kingdoms of Elfin* (that's £9 rather than £12.99). The sale prices will be activated on 1 December, which is nicely in time for Christmas shopping.



Remember our Gift Card!

We now offer Handheld Press Gift Cards. These can be bought from the Shop, in £20 or £30 denominations, and you can buy as many as you need to reach the total you want to spend on a present for yourself or a friend (you may have noticed that Christmas is coming).

The REALLY good thing about our Gift Cards is that they give exclusive early access to all our forthcoming titles. If a Gift Card is used to pre-order a book that isn't yet published, then it will be posted to the recipient as soon as we have the copies from the printer, which can be as early as two months ahead of publication. For instance, we can now post Gift Card-ordered copies of *Of Cats and Elfin* and *Business as Usual*. No other gift card has this superpower. Use it wisely, and make your friends and family happy.



Retreat to write with us

We are also interested in nurturing living writers, and to that end have set up a writing retreat for people looking for protected writing time to work on their science fiction and fantasy stories or non-fiction. The retreat includes optional masterclasses from two acclaimed sff authors, Una McCormack (who wrote the Introduction to *The Exile Waiting*), and Helen Marshall, both creative writing tutors at Anglia Ruskin University in Cambridge. Handheld will also be offering a workshop on How to Pitch Your Book.

The retreat will be full board, in Malvern in Worcestershire, on 1-4 July 2020, and [all details can be found here](#). There are limited places (only three left now, or six if sharing a room with a friend or partner) so if you are interested, do book, or get in touch.



News from the garden of Handheld Towers

The spring bulbs are in, the frosted bean plants have finally been grubbed up, and the lavender and lupin pods have been trimmed back. Many fungi new to us are growing in the pots and garden beds due to the very wet autumn. The old wooden dining-room table that we bought with wedding present money 25 years ago, that was retired earlier this year to the garden because it was too big for the new house, is swelling and blackening with all the rain. Wondering if it will actually last the winter out there, or just fall apart. The little pink fuchsia in its pot that we bought at a church sale is still flowering gamely, as is a deceptively fragile plant with hosta-like leaves and mauve abutilon-like flowers. We bought that at the village show and have no idea what it's called. The miniature cyclamen from a friend's garden across the valley are leafing up nicely. All the ash tree's leaves are gone, and to David's amazement the deer have nibbled the hellebores down to the soil. We've put a nice aromatic salvia there instead, with unappealing woody stems, that Berkshire deer (so we hear) completely ignore.

Kate & David

Handheld Press

The Handheld newsletter is only sent to readers who have expressed an interest in receiving news from us. Our aim is to be informative and useful, and to keep you in the picture about what we're up to, offers and promotions.

Please rest assured that your details will never be passed on to any third parties nor used for any other purpose.

Should you wish to not receive any further email newsletters from us then we'll be disappointed, but we'll understand.