

The Handheld Newsletter

June 2020

We are three

The newsletter is a bit early this month because we wanted to give you as much notice as possible of our birthday offer: we are three years old on 9 June. To celebrate, when you buy any two books from our site, we will send you a free paperback! Just place your order [through our shop](#), and use the Notes box in the ordering process to tell us which free book you'd like. From 9 June to 15 June inclusive.



We know we're three years old because our incorporation certificate from Companies House tells us so. Handheld actually began as a gleam in Kate's eye one weekend in March 2017, as she mulled over a casual comment about setting up a publishing house, from Christoph Ehland, one of her German research colleagues, at the end of a workshop on colonial middlebrow. It did not take long for her to realise that a career spent with one hand as an editor and the other as a researcher in twentieth-century publishing history was only going to lead to one happy ending: a new publishing house to bring back into print the stories that other reprint houses were somehow missing. Kate's advantage is that she's spent thirty years researching this area, and she could see that the books that interested her most were not the kind that were being sold by other reprint houses. Kate wanted to bring back the spiky, funny, independent, quirky and individual stories, by authors of any sex who happened to be outstanding storytellers. And they seem to be popular with the public too.

A new video

If you're interested in hearing Kate talk about publishing from the room where it happens, [have a look at our new video](#), which Kate recorded for a class of MA creative writing students, talking about a day in the life of an independent publisher. It's a little bit fuzzy but the sound is good.

The Bath Magazine

The Bath Festival should have been over by now, but it never happened, due to you-know-what. Here's a story in the [Bath Magazine](#) about what our panel at the Festival would have been about.

Quick Quiz

To win a free Handheld paperback (it's a surprise) enter our quiz on 15th June by sending your answers to enquiries@handheldpress.co.uk. The winning entry of four correct answers will be selected at random by placing a pin in a list of names on 16th June. UK addresses only, sorry.

1. How many years has Handheld been in business?
2. Who wrote Kingdoms of Elfin?
3. Name a Handheld title that isn't written by a woman (there are some).
4. Name a Handheld title that uses a photograph on its cover.

Happy playing!



What Not

We think it's time our 2018 best-seller *What Not* by Rose Macaulay had some more love. I mean, it's desperately romantic, piercingly intelligent, and takes no hostages when it comes to laughing at the hypocrisy of political figures and their civil servants. You can buy a copy [through our shop](#) with a discount valid until 17th June. Use code ROSEWN to claim your £2.99 discount (includes p&p for UK delivery addresses).



The Conscientious Objector's Wife has an anniversary

Two years ago on 26 June we published *The Conscientious Objector's Wife*, and it is still selling steadily. Lucy Sunderland spent the last two years of the First World War supporting her imprisoned husband on her own, looking after their three children, earning a living as best she could, and stoutly upholding her pacifist and socialist beliefs. This is working-class women's history that survived because her family kept her letters for over a hundred years. [Enjoy a discount](#) on the £19.99 price, and buy it for £15.99, using code LUCY. Valid until midnight on 26 June.



A birthday discount

On 29th June it'll be Kate's mum's birthday, so we would like to offer a one-day discount on *Business as Usual*, which she loved so much she's buying more copies to send as birthday presents. Please celebrate Mrs Macdonald's birthday with her! Use code MrsM to claim £2.99 from this outstandingly good book. Offer expires 30th June.

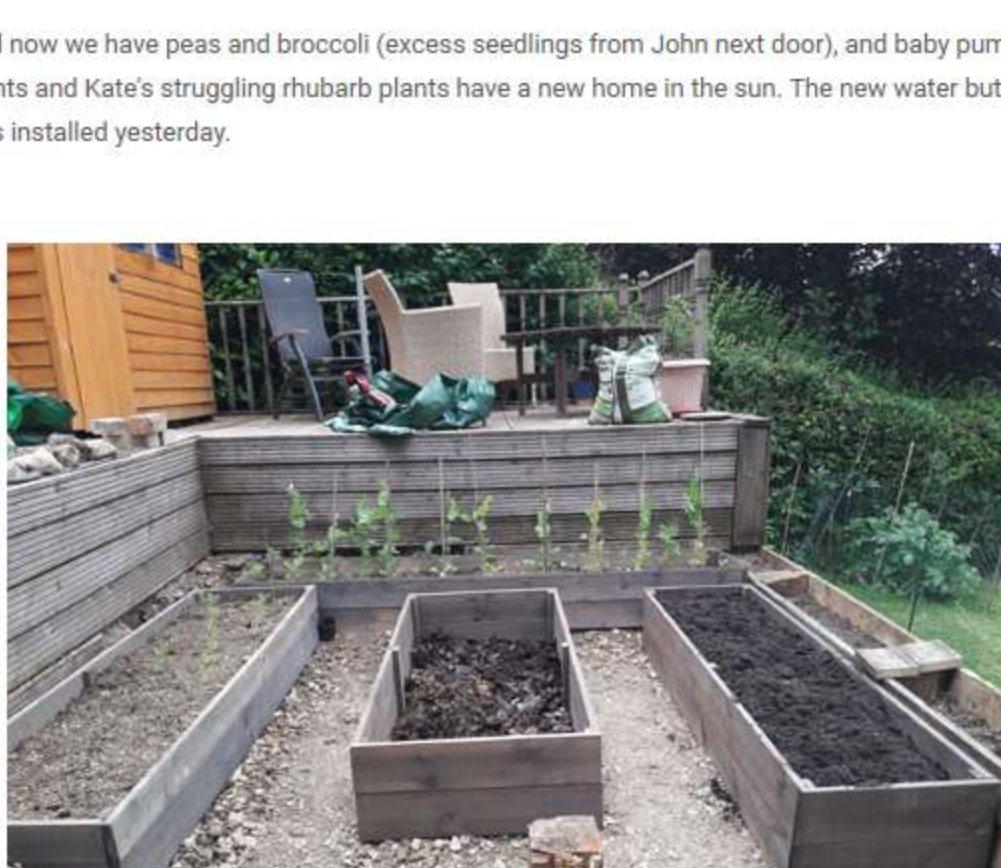


News from the garden

David took a week off work, and because he can't go anywhere, he continued the Great Work of changing the useless piece of lowered decking covering the dumped builders' rubble halfway up the garden, into a vegetable bed. It is now the largest piece of flat land we have in the garden. (We live on the side of a hill.)

He hired a small skip, and spent the week with the pickaxe, moving the rubble down to the skip in small bags with the wheelbarrow. Once the rubble layer was out, the natural soil of the hillside lay exposed: six parts limestone nodules to one part sticky clay, and he needed to move a lot more of it to get to the right depth. He decided that as he would only have to haul fresh soil up the hill to fill the veg beds with, he'd better sieve out and keep the clay soil that we already had. Metal riddling sieves last longer than plastic ones. He shifted six cubic metres of stones, and then had a happy time demolishing the rotten wooden surrounds, with help from our social-distancing friends Ben and Susan who walked across the valley to have a go too. The beds are now filled with clay and compost, and there's a wire fence across the entrance to stop the deer treating the beds as a buffet table.

And now we have peas and broccoli (excess seedlings from John next door), and baby pumpkin plants and Kate's struggling rhubarb plants have a new home in the sun. The new water butt was installed yesterday.



Happy reading, and do be cautious in your return to a more sociable life.

Kate & David

Handheld Press