

The Handheld Newsletter

July 2020

Marketing madness

We don't know what demon possessed us when we decided that we would print the last four books for 2020 all together in June and July. (It was something to do with shipping them to the US in time.) It has been absolute chaos in the office, with Kate juggling four sets of production schedules, shipping numbers, review copies, press releases, publicity plans, packing the right combinations of preorders, and (even worse) packing the right combinations of review copies and press releases. On the very few occasions she has been able to do some actual editing, or consider new titles, it's been like emerging from subterranean gloom into the cheerful light of day. Never Again.

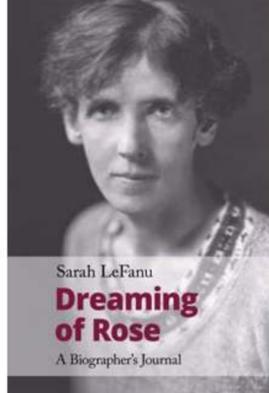
But the new books are lovely.



Dreaming of Rose. A Biographer's Journal

In March, just before lockdown descended, Kate went to hear a talk by Sarah LeFanu, biographer of Rose Macaulay, about her new biography of Arthur Conan Doyle, Mary Kingsley and Rudyard Kipling, *Something of Themselves*. This was very interesting, but so was the selection of Sarah's self-published books available for purchase. Kate snapped up a copy of *Dreaming of Rose*, Sarah's 2013 memoir of researching and writing her 2003 Rose Macaulay biography, and gobbled it up practically overnight. It is a wonderful story, of the actuality of researching a life, of the guesses, the letters, the hopeful requests for photographs and information, the interviews with relations that go slightly awry, researching in cold libraries and deciding to follow in Rose's footsteps in Turkey and Italy to track down the places she had written about and where she had been. In amongst all this was Sarah's own story, of battling to do her job as a creative writing lecturer and broadcaster, and of dealing with what life throws at you. It's a feminist narrative about writing life, her own and another woman's, and it is absolutely marvellous.

Noting that it was self-published and almost completely unknown, Kate asked Sarah whether she'd be interested in a contract. We will be publishing a revised and updated edition of *Dreaming of Rose* in September 2021, alongside our edition of Rose Macaulay's *Personal Pleasures*. You can preorder a copy [here](#).

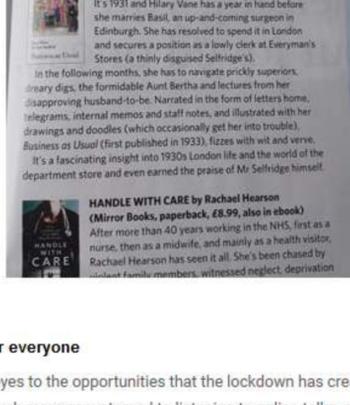


New pages in our website

We don't know if you rummage through our website very often, but we'd like to draw your attention to two new pages: a [full catalogue page](#), and a page for [our books of and about letters](#). If you see anything that needs fixing, please tell us!

Business as Usual and the Women's Institute

To our great pleasure, *Business as Usual* was reviewed in *WI Life*, the bimonthly magazine for the Women's Institute. This has drawn the book to the attention of hundreds of thousands of women in the UK, and sales have been perking up nicely. Kate put a notice about the review on the Unofficial WI Facebook page, offering to give talks, and has had four enquiries in a week, and one firm booking.



Kate can do talks for everyone

This has opened our eyes to the opportunities that the lockdown has created. People are now, for better or worse, much more accustomed to listening to online talks, and online talks are a very effective way of bringing the speaker to the audience. We've been missing our book fairs and other events where we have book stalls, because we miss talking to people about our books. The ubiquity and widespread use of Zoom and other online conference technology (let us not forget Skype, or Teams) has prompted us to offer talks to anyone at all, anywhere at all, at a time when we are normally awake. So, if your book group, or lunch group, or themed group of any description is looking for a free and practiced speaker (jokes are included), with a discount code for your members, please get in touch at enquiries@handheldpress.co.uk. Kate offers talks on all aspects of publishing (that she knows about), about Handheld, and about individual titles. Just ask.

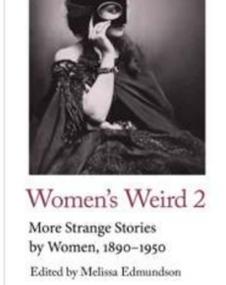
Kate's birthday

It'll be Kate's birthday on 22 July, so we are offering a £2.99 discount on ANY Handheld title, using the code CAKE when you buy [through our shop](#). Offer valid for 22 July only.



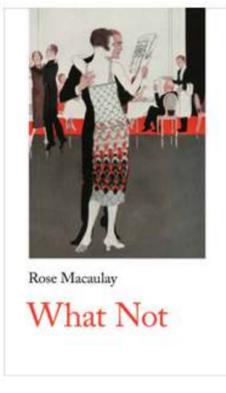
Kath's birthday

Kath looks our Instagram and videos, and shares her birthday on 30 July with her rabbit Morrigan. To celebrate their Gothic togetherness, please enjoy a £2.99 discount for *Women's Weird*, using code LOLLY in our shop. Offer valid for 30 July only.



An early August offer

It would have been Rose Macaulay's birthday on 1st August, and she adored going to parties. To celebrate please enjoy a £2.99 discount on *What Not*, her terrific 1918 novel about reorganising love and society to make sure that war never happens again. Use code FLAPPER to order the book [through our shop](#).



Our sale box

Our sale box is, as ever, available for bargain shopping. At the moment we have copies of *Desire*, *What Not*, *What Might Have Been*, *The Caravaners*, *Business as Usual*, *Blitz Writing* and *After the Death of Ellen Keldberg* available at £10 each. All are quite good, but they have either a bash or a crinkle on the cover that makes them unsuitable to sell at normal retail prices. Email us at enquiries@handheldpress.co.uk to reserve your copies.



We now accept euros and US dollars

Increasing enquiries from non-sterling customers have encouraged us to open TransferWise accounts for euro and US dollar payments. To order the books you want in those currencies, email us at enquiries@handheldpress.co.uk, and let us know the titles and quantities you want. We'll calculate the cost, and when you've made the payment, we'll send the books. Easy!

News from the garden

As regular readers will know, we have deer. We've fenced off the new vegetable garden, which has worked well (though something hungry devours the broccoli leaves every night). But we forgot – *o mea maxima culpa* – that deer eat roses, and since last night we have no more roses. Kate is not happy about this, at all.

In other wildlife news, one of the visiting badgers has begun to actually shove the middle compost frame aside to get at the melon rind. Next time we have melon rind to throw away, we'll just leave it out in the garden. Here is [a new video of badgers frolicking](#), assembled from about six months of camera trap footage.