

The Handheld Newsletter

January 2022

Jane's Country Year

She's here, at last. The online book launch is on Monday 17th January at 7.30pm UK time, and we have guests! Kim Spencer of the Malcolm Saville Society, who wrote a lovely piece about the book in the December issue of the *Shropshire Magazine*, Hazel Sheky Bird who wrote our introduction and a special appearance by Graeme Bowerman, grandson of the artist Bernard Bowerman, who will be showing us a few pieces of his grandfather's art. You can register [here for your free ticket](#).

The *Church Times* used one of the illustrations for a cover in its 12 December issue, and the reviews are beginning to come in from bloggers and elsewhere. Do look at them [on our website](#).



Rose Macaulay writing about London

Kate will be giving an online talk for the Guildhall Library on Rose Macaulay's London writing, on Wednesday 26th January, at 2pm UK time. Rose adored living in London, and wrote a lot about it, so there is a lot to talk about. [Register for your free ticket here](#).



Rose Macaulay writes about London

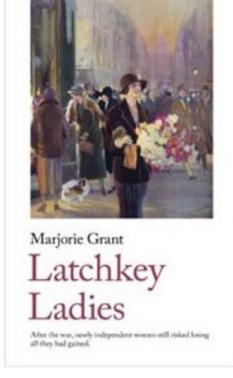
Book launch for Marjorie Grant's *Latchkey Ladies*: Tuesday 15 March

Still at the Guildhall Library, Kate and Sarah LeFanu (author of *Dreaming of Rose*) will be in conversation about Marjorie Grant's first novel *Latchkey Ladies* (1921), for which Sarah wrote the Introduction. Sarah also (re)discovered Marjorie Grant when she was writing her 2003 biography of Macaulay. What she had to say about Grant and the novel, and about the close connections between Grant, Macaulay and Gerald O'Donovan and his family, brought *Latchkey Ladies* to our attention, and very glad we were to have discovered it, albeit a century late.

At the moment this talk is still a hybrid book launch, both for an in-person audience at the Guildhall Library and streamed on Zoom, 2-3pm. It may yet go full Zoom, but your tickets will be valid either way. You can book your free tickets in the [link in their downloadable programme](#).

*Latchkey Ladies* at Westminster Libraries: Wednesday 16 March

If you can't make the launch on 15 March, Kate and Sarah will be talking about *Latchkey Ladies* for Westminster Libraries at a second library event, on Weds 16 March, 5-6pm. This will be wholly on Zoom, and will have a slightly different focus, since if they had the same conversation all over again they'd be bored. Novelty the spice of life. You'll be able to book the Westminster event soon.



New catalogue

We have a new academic catalogue (actually, it's our first academic catalogue) which we can email to anyone interested: just ask ([enquiries@handheldpress.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@handheldpress.co.uk)). We will also be printing a new main catalogue, but we're waiting until supplies of the last one have dwindled sufficiently before we hit 'print'. (Kate has a distressing habit of immediately posting out the new things before the old ones are used up. This needs to be avoided, our accountant says.) The academic catalogue is a large selection from our titles that are most likely to be snapped up for teaching, and the blurbs have been rewritten accordingly to highlight the key teachable themes. We also offer reading copies ...

**Handheld Press titles for teaching**

Handheld Press publishes new editions of forgotten authors and lost works of literature, letters and biography, all with introductory essays by specialists in plain English, with astonishingly useful notes on the texts. We can supply desk copies: see below.

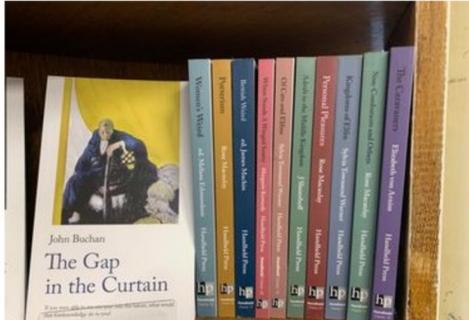
**Novels, memoirs and letters from twentieth-century peace and war**

<p><b>Inez Holden, Blitz Writing (1941 &amp; 1942)</b> Holden's Second World War novella <i>Night Shift</i>, and the Blitz diary she planned with George Orwell, is also <i>Different At The Time</i>. Essential documents of the Blitz — 715 £12.99, ISBN 9781912766062</p>	<p><b>Inez Holden, There's No Story There, And Other Worstcase Writing (1944)</b> A novel about the lives of conscripted workers at Statevale, an enormous rural munitions factory in the north of England, plus three longform essays of war-time reportage. £12.99, ISBN 9781912766369</p>	<p><b>Margaret Kennedy, Where Stands A Winged Sentry (1941)</b> By the author of <i>The Constant Nymph</i>, this compelling war-time memoir was only published in the USA. An important example of contemporary home-front literature' — <i>The Times</i> £12.99, ISBN 9781912766383</p>
<p><b>Rose Macaulay, Non-Combatants and Others. Writings Against War, 1916-1945</b> Macaulay's great pacifist novel of the First World War, plus her anti-war journalism from 1916 to 1945, and her devastating</p>	<p><b>John Llewelyn Rhys, The Flying Shadow (1936)</b> A novel of 1930s aviation, of modern technology and courage, and the art of flying as an escape, testing human skill against the vagaries of nature and the laws of physics.</p>	<p><b>John Llewelyn Rhys, England is My Village, and The World Ours Me A Living (1939 &amp; 1941)</b> Powerful fiction from an RAF pilot about the golden age of British aviation, in peacetime and in war. Winner of the 1942 Hawthornden</p>

Scarthin Books has a Handheld shelf!

Scarthin Books in Cromford, near Matlock in the Dales, has created a whole shelf of Handheld press titles which is just lovely of them. At 3.42 hours driving from Bath it's a bit too far for a day trip, but we will be visiting as soon as it's feasible.

If you see any other Handheld displays in bookshops, we'd love to know about them: please send pics!



New Year's sale

Our sale box overruneth, so if there's a slightly bashed Handheld title you'd like to snap up for £10 (free postage in UK, postage added for elsewhere), [do email us](#) to secure your book and arrange payment. We currently have stocks of *What Might Have Been*, *Desire* (these are actually quite rare items as the print edition has been remaindered), *A Quaker Conscientious Objector*, *Women's Weird*, *Valentine Ackland*, *Women's Weird 2*, *What Not*, *After the Death of Ellen Keldberg*, *The Conscientious Objector's Wife* (£12, as it's a hardback), *Dreaming of Rose*, *The Caravaners*, *Business as Usual*, *Adrift in the Middle Kingdom* and *The Exile Waiting*.



News from the garden

Currently it's quite crunchy under a hard frost that has lasted for two days. The pond is frozen solid. The birdbaths are irredeemably frozen over. We bought two extra arms for the bird feeding pole which is now a full-on Bird Food This Way feathered friend attraction, with a lot of traffic. Five containers of seeds, nuts and fat balls dangle from a point scientifically tested as being the one place equidistant from the hedges where the squirrels can't leap onto the food and gorge on it. Our neighbours accidentally parked a birdbath too close to their bird feeders and lost all their food to the squirrels in about an hour. They took turns to Hoover up all the food: we watched them!

Our current bird visitors include Mr and Mrs Blackcap and Mr and Mrs Bullfinch, the usual swarm of bluetits, great tits, marsh tits, coal tits and robins, fairly regular great spotted woodpeckers, a couple of shy long-tailed tits, nuthatches and a recent chaffinch who we've not seen before. The dunnocks lurk in the undergrowth, and the blackbirds, jackdaws, crows and magpies do a lot of shouting. We've not seen the wrens for a while: possibly it's too cold.

New plant growth is coming through already. The catkins are a luminous golden yellow in the freezing fog, and the daffodils on the former bonfire patch are doing nicely. Snowdrops will be out in a week or so, but the cyclamen have already arrived. The sight of a hellebore in the front garden sent Kate haring to the other known hellebore location at the back to see if it had been eaten by deer, but it's not even come up yet: safe for now.

That's a spot we forgot to wire. Before the frost came we planted the (potted) Christmas tree up at the top boundary near the blackberry hedge but didn't bother adding wire as they survive in the wild. We had to enclose the apple and cherry trees with wire netting to keep the deer off, as the cherry trunk had been gnawed by a muntjac. We moved two wrens' worth of compost leaves from their compost frame into the new leaf compost enclosure. Kate planted two pot-bound pink penstemons, a leggy purple salvia and a matted clot of orange crocosmia roots in the yellow dogwood bed and remembered to put the netting back (see deer, above). We discovered that our brussels sprouts plants are actually producing sprouts! (The vegetable garden is already netted.) But the border with the hellebore may have to be wired. The wire netting is dark green so it's more or less invisible from 5 feet away: really not as intrusive as you might think.

Onward to February!

Kate & David

Handheld Press