



Charity Number 1169618

# Newsletter 1

## December 2020

This is the first occasional Newsletter from Ilminster Literary Festival, one of the many successful community events running annually in this lively town where we live. Hello to ILF Friends and sponsors and to members of the wider community who might like to learn more. Planning for next year's ILF is well under way and, as in the past, we're looking forward to welcoming large numbers to a week of top quality events.

### In the beginning.....

The first Ilminster Literary and Arts Festival in 2016 had the enthusiastic support of the South Somerset Arts Officer, who nevertheless thought we were extremely brave (and possibly foolish or mad?). I had approached her for information about funding and sponsorship opportunities.

The Festival went off well, with 28 events in 15 venues. Audience feedback confirmed we'd done really well for a town the size of Ilminster, lacking in instant free access to large local facilities. This had influenced our initial "fringe" approach, with lots of small sized events. On just one day, for example, we held 7 events in 4 different venues. The Festival has grown from there.

ILF is grateful for the extra sponsorship and support we have gained along the way. The Friends of ILF, and venues like Monks Yard, Jordans Courtyard, the Shrubbery Hotel, Dillington House, the Warehouse Theatre and more recently Ilminster Arts Centre, have all been very generous and this has helped us to move on.....and be bolder. Thank you sincerely!

The more I reflect, the luckier I think we've been. ILF 2021 will be the fifth Festival - unless, like 2020, it's cancelled because of Covid 19. We look forward to welcoming you all, to the local community's continuing support and to a first class event for the town, with something for everyone.

**BRENDA LAKE (PICTURED RIGHT) ILF CHAIR 2021**



### Festival Dates 2021

**Thursday June 3rd  
to  
Thursday June 10<sup>th</sup>  
inclusive**

### Thanks go to.....

Drew Belobaba at The Ilminster Bookshop for his support in the first few Festivals. We are now looking forward to a close working relationship with Chard Bookshop.

## What's on at ILF 2021?

Sorry, we're not giving out full details just yet, they'll come in the spring. But, as it's that time of year, we asked some of those booked to appear what tipples they're likely to be enjoying this Christmas, along perhaps with a favourite book .....

**Tim Moorey, crossword setter in The Times**, believes in everything in moderation, needing a clear mind to dream up those cryptic clues. He's content with Twinings Decaff Breakfast Tea in the morning and an occasional evening Cointreau.

**Tim Mirfin, professional Opera singer**, plumped for "a big fat round red wine, a Barolo", reminding him of long meals in the Italian sunshine. He adds that professional singers need to indulge in heavy Italian reds only if the next day is reasonably clear, since they're never likely to stop after one glass!

**The Noir Collective, a group of 3 award winning writers of psychological fiction** favoured the following :

- ✚ Katharine Johnson – an Aperol Spritz, reminding her of "happy times in Italy where two of my books are set".
- ✚ G.D. Harper – Underberg, a quirky German herbal digestif. Devotees collect bottle tops and in return receive exclusive merchandise from the makers.
- ✚ Helen Matthews – Gin and tonic made with Bombay Sapphire, unflavoured tonic and a slice of lime.

**Research by Linda Vjeh**, ILF Trustee, who is herself rather partial to a Negroni, made with equal measures of gin, red vermouth and Campari, garnished with orange peel.

Cheers everyone!



Despite the constraints of Coronavirus, ILF managed to run a writing competition this summer. Congratulations go to winner Alison Templeton from Norton-sub-Hamdon, who attended a creative writing workshop, led by Rachel Godfrey, during the 2016 Festival and has been writing ever since.

**See your work and name in print!** - Please let us have a review of a book you have read and enjoyed, for possible publication in our next Newsletter due out in the spring. Reviews + your name to be submitted please to the Festival office via e mail – [gill@magnolia.co.uk](mailto:gill@magnolia.co.uk)