



ILF 2021 Newsletter 4

Charity number 1169618

Special Post – Festival Edition, November 2021

After Covid put paid to ILF 2020 there was plenty of angst over whether the 2021 Festival would follow suit. Should we cancel again given that Covid was still around? Would venues be open for use? Would audiences stay away even if we went ahead? And if ILF 2021 did happen would it at least break even financially and not eat into limited cash reserves?

It was touch and go for many months but a smaller Festival than usual finally went ahead between November 10 and 13. We're so glad it did! **Thank you** to everyone who turned out to support it, to the speakers who provided such great sessions, to the Friends of ILF, sponsors and advertisers for their generosity and to the Ilminster venues - The Warehouse Theatre, Monks Yard, The Arts Centre and Donyatt Village Hall (venue for the pre- Festival quiz) - which provided invaluable cooperation and help. The positive comments were numerous, the audiences genuinely pleased to see ILF's return. Despite a deliberate reduction in audience sizes to avoid unhealthy overcrowding, finances held up well, helping to ensure the future of Ilminster's very own Festival.

A look back at ILF November 2021.....



Above – Alan Johnson and Mike Lanigan in conversation

Right -Stephen Moss : Britain's Favourite Birds



Below – "This looks like a good read"



Ken and Ken - Box office staff at work!



Left – Andrew Lownie : The Duke of Windsor, Traitor King



Left – Helen Fry : M19, a history of the Secret Service for escape and evasion in W. War 2

If you missed the Zoom event.....

Anyone who missed this session missed a real treat. Author Tessa Boase's talk on her book "Etta Lemon : The Woman Who Saved the Birds" was about an aspect of Victorian and Edwardian times rarely considered today - the widespread craze amongst women of all classes for extravagant hats, swathed in gorgeous feathers and even featuring whole stuffed birds perched among the plumage.

The resulting trade in exotic feathers was hugely profitable, worth £20 million by 1890, £200 million in today's money. By 1903 a single ounce of egret feathers was valued at twice its weight in gold while in one auction alone the feathers of 8000 parrots, 1450 grebes and 12000 humming birds were sold. The trade proved devastating for some of the world's most beautiful bird species. Finally, women such as Etta Lemon became pioneers in protecting birds from slaughter purely in the name of fashion. Out of their work came the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), which still thrives today.

Tessa's book was originally published in 2018 as "Mrs Pankhurst's Purple Feather", to mark the 100th anniversary of the achievement of votes for women. The Suffragettes it seems were as devoted to plume swathed hats as they were to winning those votes.....



"As good as a detective novel, a real page turner"



Left – Abigail Willis : Secret Gardens of Somerset



Left – Alan Johnson book signing : The Late Train to Gipsy Hill



Right – Caroline Newark: The Making of a Tudor (Readers Group)



Charlie and Brian – at work in The Warehouse Theatre lighting box



Left – Dr Lucy Pollock : The Book About Getting Older (for people who don't want to talk about it)

"The talk by Lucy Pollock was one of the best ever I've been to.....such a larky, informing and happy talk"



Tim Mirfin – An Opera Singer’s Life. Special Friends’ event



John Crockford Hawley – Potty Parsons



Barry Venning – the life, times and cartoons of Carl Giles



Appreciative Arts Centre audience.

I thought Tim Mirfin’s was “the best talk we’ve ever had at a Lit Fest”

Special thanks to our Festival sponsors.....

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What comes next?

It’s onwards and upwards from here on. In just 6 months time and all being well, ILF 2022 will happen, this time in a more usual part of the year - May 21 to 28 inclusive. Don’t forget to diary the dates and look out for details about who will be appearing and the events that will be included. Planning is well advanced - what else did the committee have to do during lockdowns? - with next year’s Festival being still bigger and better than 2021. Unmissable!

If you’re looking for a small gift, Yola Munro has produced these attractive vouchers for use against the cost of any Festival ticket in May 2022. Priced at £5 and £10 they’re available **now** from the Festival office - Please send a cheque and Stamped Addressed Envelope to Ilminster Literary Festival, Bay House East, Bay Hill, Ilminster TA19 OAT. Alternatively, call in there to buy in person from Secretary Gill Walker or e mail ilminsterlitfest@gmail.com for more information.



Become a Friend of Ilminster Literary Festival for 2022

The cost is £35 a year and apart from our grateful thanks, this brings the following benefits :

- ✚ Festival updates and articles throughout the year via our Newsletter
- ✚ A copy of the Festival Programme delivered to your registered address
- ✚ An invitation to social events during the year
- ✚ Priority booking for Festival events. Booking will be opened exclusively to Friends and Sponsors earlier than the general public
- ✚ Three complimentary tickets to a wide choice of events during the Festival, when booked in advance using the Friends and Sponsors Booking Form
- ✚ Recognition and acknowledgement in the Festival Programme
- ✚ The satisfaction of helping to further embed ILF into Ilminster's literary and cultural scene and through it to promote and enhance our town's reputation.

Please request an application form by e mailing ilminsterlitfest@gmail.com

Current Friends will automatically receive a renewal form.

Become an ILF volunteer

It costs nothing but you'll still have our grateful thanks! If you can spare a little time, particularly during and around the Festival itself, we would love to add you to the Volunteer list. This is your chance to be, for example, an usher, a ticket collector, a driver moving equipment or helping to distribute programme brochures. In other words, an all round invaluable helper.

If interested, please e mail your name and contact details to the Festival Office - and thank you – ilminsterlitfest@gmail.com

Join the ILF mailing list if you'd like to receive our regular e mailed newsletter and other updates

Please submit your request by e mail to ilminsterlitfest@gmail.com

**Thank you again for your support.
It's truly appreciated!**