



The Home Library Service in Bridport needs more volunteers!

Are you a keen reader? Can't bear to be without a good book? Then you'll understand how important it is to be able to carry on reading, even if you can't get to your local library.

The Home Library Service is provided to customers who, for a variety of reasons, cannot use the conventional library service. These customers may be living in their own homes, or living in residential or nursing establishments; they can be private, housing association, or statutory establishments provided by the local authority or sheltered housing provided by either the local authority or a private housing association.

The Home Library Service is offered to someone who is unable to leave the home; travel to the library; gain easy access to the library, for example, due to poor facilities for users with a mobility problem or to carry materials to or from the library.

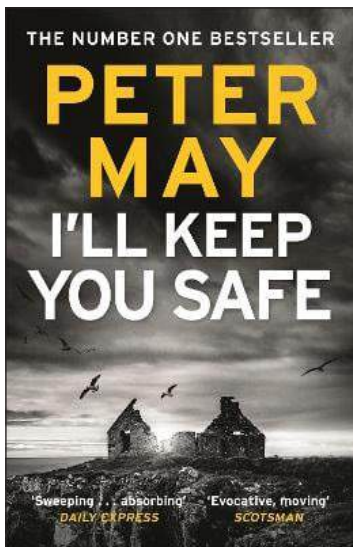
The Service also serves those who experience a combination of the above criteria and may include those who are so elderly and frail or infirm that it

prevents them using a conventional service point or other collection; those with physical difficulties; those with sensory disabilities, especially severe visual impairment; those with profound or severe learning difficulties; those with certain mental health problems which make it difficult to leave the home; those suffering from long term illness; those who are culturally isolated in the home or carers who are unable to leave the home for any length of time.

The need may be long, seasonal (illness or disability worsened by bad weather conditions) or temporary (following a severe accident or recuperating from a serious illness.)

Bridport's Home Library Service is looking for more volunteers in the Bridport area to join their team, choosing and delivering books to housebound readers in the area every 3 weeks. Training and support will be given, and expenses paid.

If you are interested please contact Maria Jacobson, Royal Voluntary Service Manager Dorset Home Library Service, on 01305 236666 or e-mail maria.jacobson@royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk



I'll Keep You Safe by Peter May

A prolific writer of suspense stories, Peter May, is well known for his series of novels like The Lewis Trilogy, The China Thrillers and the Enzo Files.

This though is a stand-alone tale based around a Hebridean husband and wife company which is seeking to establish its own niche market by weaving a special variety of Harris Tweed.

The business venture appears to be moving forward progressively when the pair travel to Paris for a sales conference.

Then, in a roller-coaster opening chapter, Niamh (Neave) gets a disturbing message about her husband Ruairidh (Roo-are-ee), he leaves in a car with a female Russian designer before the vehicle is dramatically torn apart by a massive explosion killing them both.

Niamh's life is in ruins as she returns home with her husband's remains. There is the tenuous hope that she can keep the fledgling business afloat and maybe discover who was malicious enough to want her husband dead.

High on its list of attributes is that this story does not rely on the well-used 'police procedural' routine featured in television dramas like Vera and Grace. There's more of an ad-hoc approach to the bombing investigation which is led by French detective Sylvie Braque, who has flown in from Paris, and local policeman, George Gunn.

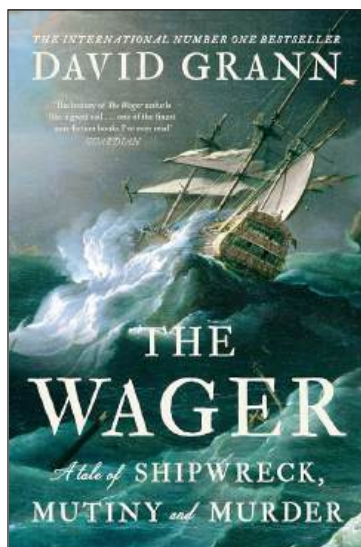
A map of the Isle of Lewis and Harris proved useful in the edition I read and there is also some helpful guidance on how to pronounce Gaelic names.

Peter May knows the area very well and is keen to share the information. The plot tends to drift a little when he becomes rather 'Hardy-esque' about the local scenery but, after the welcome idyllic interlude, the reader is soon steered back on track.

Review by John Davis

Published by riverrun, an imprint of Quercus Editions Ltd

Historical Novels reviewed by **John Davis**



The Wager by David Grann

THIS painstakingly researched novel from investigative journalist David Grann is not so much an historical ‘whodunnit’ but more a case of who did what to whom and do the ends ever justify the means.

The Wager in question is a British Navy man-of-war that departed from Portsmouth in September 1740 as part of a small squadron of ships on a ‘secret’ mission to capture a Spanish treasure galleon.

Down in the Southern Ocean, around the notoriously stormy Cape Horn, The Wager is wrecked and those who survive are washed up on an uninhabited island.

Early in 1742, thirty of the skeletal survivors from The Wager, led by gunner John Bulkeley, come ashore in Brazil before eventually making their way back to Britain to relate their harrowing story.

All seems well until six months later three further seamen from the vessel including Captain David Cheap and midshipman John Byron make it to the coast of Chile with an altogether contradictory account of what has transpired.

More than reputations are at stake here as witness statements are dissected and Admiralty boards of enquiry and court martials begin to sift through a plethora of evidence.

Grann, who took five years to collate his findings and spent three weeks on an island in the Southern Ocean as part of his research, has his own verdict on the outcomes though there is an open invitation for the reader to think otherwise.

Incidentally, if you wanted to know what ‘powder monkeys’ were, where the sayings ‘toe the line’ and ‘under the weather’ originated and what exactly The War of Jenkins’ Ear was all about then this is the book for you.

Published by Simon and Schuster



While Paris Slept by Ruth Druart

FICTIONAL stories set in the Second World War has proved to be a popular genre for authors although for some readers immersing themselves fully in the period may be too visceral an experience.

That said, Ruth Druart’s debut novel is a good place to start for, while there is cruelty, sadness, hatred and separation to tug at the senses, it’s counterbalanced by kindness, hope, courage and love.

To deal with the logistics first. The book is written in dual timelines and multiple perspectives. The narrative is well organised though so each chapter is given a date, location and character name tag.

In terms of chronology, the outline plot is as follows:

It’s May 1944, a young Jewish couple, Sarah and David are rounded up in occupied Paris to be transported to Auschwitz. They have a young infant son, Sam. As she boards the train, Sarah makes a heart-rending decision, thrusting the bundle wrapped baby into the arms of a nearby French railway worker Jean-Luc who in

turn takes the youngster home to his girlfriend Charlotte.

Nine years later, Jean-Luc and Charlotte, having survived life under the Nazis in France, have re-located to a new life in Santa Cruz, California where Sam is growing up in a situation where familial bonds have been established and a cultural identity is being developed.

That is until one day there is a knock on the door...

Throughout the reader is encouraged to empathise with the difficult dilemmas that arise and decisions that have to be taken.

In summary, I’m reminded of a quote from historian and scholar Yehuda Bauer: “Thou shalt not be a victim; thou shalt not be a perpetrator; but, above all, thou shalt not be a by-stander.”

Published by Headline Review