



[www.rugbyliteraryfestival.co.uk](http://www.rugbyliteraryfestival.co.uk)



These books have been created by seven artists from Rugby Artists and Makers Network, with support from Rugby First.

**Rupert Brooke**  
**3 August 1887 – 23 April 1915**  
**“The Soldier”**

**Rupert Brooke was born in Rugby and went to Rugby School, where he won prizes for his poetry. He was in his twenties when he went off to fight in the First World War. He didn't come back, but his poems live on and the patch of land where he is buried on the island of Skyros "is for ever England".**

**Huyen Phan** is a Vietnamese artist who specialises in mixed media, textured art. Huyen's art is inspired by her love of the universe and the way it makes her feel. Her theme of hope and continuity of life and the ways in which these emotions are intertwined with the natural world.

In addition to her passion for landscape art, her work explores the intersection of mental health, with a particular focus on women's experiences in closed locations such as hospitals, immigration centers, and prisons. She now works for non-profit organisation Community Arts Projects UK which runs art sessions in UK prisons and supports their students after release.

Huyen's works have won The Outstanding Award in the Koestler Arts contest 2023, won The Highly Commended Award for Blog Writing, The Commended Award for Handmade Book, and The Platinum Award for Portrait Category in the Koestler Arts contest 2024.

[www.hpart86.com](http://www.hpart86.com) @hp\_art86

**Rupert Brooke** was born in Rugby in 1887. A blue plaque on the side of 5 Hillmorton Road marks where he was born. He attended Rugby School, where his father was housemaster of School Field House. Another plaque at 24 Bilton Road marks the home of his mother (school matron and magistrate) where he wrote the 1914 poems.

Brooke enlisted at the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. Within a year he both came to prominence as a war poet and met his death, not in combat but of septicaemia caused by an infected mosquito bite. He was quickly buried on the island of Skyros.

A wooden cross that had been erected to mark the grave before a permanent memorial was erected was brought back to Rugby by his mother and is now preserved in the Memorial Chapel at Rugby School.

His most famous poem is the sonnet “The Soldier”, from a collection titled “1914” published after his death. The most famous line of The Soldier appears on the plinth of his statue in Jubilee Gardens.

#### The Soldier

If I should die, think only this of me:  
That there's some corner of a foreign field  
That is for ever England. There shall be  
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;  
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,  
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,  
A body of England's, breathing English air,  
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,  
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less  
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;  
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;  
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,  
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.



[www.rugbyliteraryfestival.co.uk](http://www.rugbyliteraryfestival.co.uk)



These books have been created by seven artists from Rugby Artists and Makers Network, with support from Rugby First.

**Arthur Ransome**  
**18 January 1884 – 3 June 1967**  
**Swallows and Amazons**

**Adventurers, pirates, battles "at sea", walking the plank and digging up a stolen chest! Swallows and Amazons is about the summer holiday sailing adventures of two groups of children.**

**Arthur Ransome's Swallows and Amazons was well known to a whole generation of children and has been made into a film more than once. This book, the first and most famous of a series of twelve, was published in 1978.**

**Lucy Denton** works mainly in photography and community art, creating projects that bring people together and spark reflection. As a local teacher, Lucy enjoys bringing creativity into learning and everyday life.

She has enjoyed the challenge of trying something new with this painting and finding out about the authors of Rugby.

@lucydeepprints

In the first chapter of *Swallows and Amazons* a telegram arrives from the father in answer to various letters sent to him by the children and their mother:

BETTER DROWNED THAN DUFFERS IF NOT DUFFERS WON'T DROWN

It gradually becomes clear to the reader that the question was whether the children could have permission to sail on the dinghy *Swallow* to an island in the lake and camp there, and the “Better drowned than duffers” answer is a “yes”. On arrival on the island the *Swallows* discover they are not alone and find themselves in conflict with two girls crewing a boat named *Amazon*, before the two crews join forces - and further adventures follow.

Ransome was a student at Rugby School. He lived in the same study room that Lewis Carroll had occupied and, like him, did not entirely enjoy school: he had poor eyesight, and was neither athletic nor academic. He went on to study chemistry but soon abandoned his studies to become a writer. He wrote nature books for children, then wrote about bohemian London, literary criticism and biographies.

Ransome moved to Russia and learned the language in order to study Russian folklore. He became War Correspondent from the Russian front during the first world war and the Russian revolutions. He played chess with Lenin and Trotsky, and married Trotsky's secretary as his second wife. Further work in journalism later involved travels across Russia, China and Egypt.

He was a keen sailor, and after a well-travelled journalism career he settled in the Lake District, where the *Swallows and Amazons* series was born.



[www.rugbyliteraryfestival.co.uk](http://www.rugbyliteraryfestival.co.uk)



These books have been created by seven artists from Rugby Artists and Makers Network, with support from Rugby First.

## **Thomas Hughes 20 October 1822 – 22 March 1896 Tom Brown's School Days**

**Thomas Hughes went to Rugby School in the 1830s, when the School's most famous headmaster, Thomas Arnold, was in post, Hughes wrote about the adventures of a boy called Tom Brown at Rugby School. Tom's first day included a new top hat, sausages, and getting flattened in a rugby game.**

**Many further adventures followed for Tom, and many are true to Thomas Hughes' experiences. For example, Tom Brown scratched his name on the hands of the clock on the top of School House and, by holding the hands, left it running a few minutes slow and half the boys were late for prayers next morning! The School's museum has clock hands on display with T HUGHES scratched in\*.**

**Jenny Ball** usually works with silver, wood, and found objects, but she can't seem to help branching out. She made the wooden books and although painting isn't really her thing she will give it a go!

Tom Brown's School Days is a book she has read several times and loves the flavour it gives not just of Rugby School, but Rugby town, in days gone by.

@ditherellasworkshop

\*Rugby School's museum can be visited as part of a School tour.

**Thomas Hughes** attended Rugby School under its most famous headmaster, Dr Thomas Arnold, who is credited with reforming the school and making it a model for the public school system.

On the way to Rugby School Tom asks the coachman's opinion of Rugby:

“Werry out-o'-the-way place, sir; no paving to streets, nor no lighting.  
'Mazin' big horse and cattle fair in autumn—lasts a week—just over now.  
Takes town a week to get clean after it. Fairish hunting country. But slow  
place, sir, slow place—off the main road, you see—only three coaches a  
day, and one on 'em a two-oss wan”.

Tom's first day involves a new top hat, being shown the place for fights, and his first experience of Rugby football - the School-house match where sixty School-house boys, in white trousers, played well over a hundred boys of the rest of the school. Tom is eager but warned of the difficulty of the rules and the danger of play, nevertheless, at the end of the first day of play Tom throws himself heroically upon the ball, regardless of the stampede of boys coming for it. Tom is pulled out of the mud with the exclamation: “Well, he is a plucky youngster, and will make a player”.

After the match Tom, who as a new boy has not yet spent all his money, treats his new friends to a pound of sausages, cooked on toasting forks over the school fire.

The day finishes up with bread, cheese, beer and singing, prayers and then the indignity of being tossed to the ceiling in a blanket by the bully Flashman and his friends. Many adventures follow as Tom grows up in the school.



[www.rugbyliteraryfestival.co.uk](http://www.rugbyliteraryfestival.co.uk)



These books have been created by seven artists from Rugby Artists and Makers Network, with support from Rugby First.

## HONXY

### Dragon

**HONXY** is a young artist and writer and hopes to publish a comic book in the future. This dragon is one of the characters in a comic book she is currently working on.

**'And whenever the people would begin to whisper of defiance, her captors would release her upon them. Blinded by a violent, frantic rage, she couldn't for a moment stop to think, and realise that the people who suffered from her fury were just as trapped as she was.'**

We're very glad to have writers of the future involved in our project, as well as featuring local authors from the past and present.

## Could you write too?

**The Literary Festival** has opportunities to try a workshop on blogging, writing a three-act structure for a play, musical or book, very short flash fiction, poetry, improv, writing for children and for young adults, writing about your life, epic narrative poetry, the art of emphasis, self-publishing, and even making books with pockets!

**Rugby Library** regularly holds literary events. There are poetry workshops as part of the Literary Festival. Story Smash is a drop-in creative writing activity for ages 6-12 which runs on the third Saturday of the month. It is also involved in the Young Poet Laureate scheme.

**The Percival Guildhouse** runs courses on creative writing, writing your life story, poetry, writing for the screen, and more.

**Rugby Cafe Writers** are a group of budding and experienced writers who meet fortnightly. Beginners are very welcome and you may submit a story through their website. The group is taking part in the Literary Festival and has so far published seven books.

**Rugby Writers** meet (usually by Zoom) on the first Monday of the month to encourage and inspire each other, and have an active Facebook group. These are only some of the opportunities to explore your writing talents in Rugby!





[www.rugbyliteraryfestival.co.uk](http://www.rugbyliteraryfestival.co.uk)



These books have been created by seven artists from Rugby Artists and Makers Network, with support from Rugby First.

## Jessica Hartshorn Super Panda

Take a journey through the jungle to an animal fancy dress party, where a leafy cape transforms Paul into 'Super Panda'. But as he zigs and zags through the Jungle, is he all alone?

The story sees a little caterpillar secretly 'MUNCH, MUNCH, MUNCH' his way through the leafy cape, as a puzzled Paul tries to work out 'what is that sound?' As Paul arrives at the party without a costume, the other jungle animals reassure him, 'You don't need a cape to be Super Panda. You are always super to us'.

Super Panda is a colourful book aimed at 2-7 years olds. Published 2020.

**‘Art is essential to help us understand and see the world differently. As a freelance illustrator, artist, and educator in the cultural and heritage sector, I use art to tell stories and bring joy to the world.’**

Illustrator **Jessica Hartshorn** is based in Rugby Warwickshire and creates a range of vibrantly and colourful artworks bringing heritage to life.

After gaining her degree in Visual Communication, Illustration at Loughborough University in 2001, she worked as a freelance illustrator for 1 year before changing direction, developing a career in the museums and gallery education sector for over a decade. Returning to illustration in 2018, Jessica has completed a range of murals for schools and organisations, six illustrated children’s books and runs workshops, however she has predominantly carved out a niche specialising in illustrations for museums and galleries. Using her background in the heritage sector she now creates artwork and content for family trails, maps, interpretation and education resources all over the UK.

Now working as a freelance illustrator, artist and community practitioner predominantly in the cultural and heritage sector. With over 20 years’ experience advocating for arts education and 5 years working as a freelance illustrator, she particularly focuses on working with schools and community groups, and adults living with dementia. Jessica’s practice is divided between illustration commissions and art education delivery and projects, focusing on core drawing, painting skills and crafts, developing these into something more playful, focusing on narrative and exploration. ‘ I’m really passionate about innovative ways of working to encourage people to explore creativity differently.’

Through a fun and colourful flavour, Jessica’s Illustrations focus very much on a playful style which is incorporated into the story telling of her illustrations. Using a mixture of acrylic, paint pens, work is sketched, and then painted using layers of colour and finally adding detail.

To see more of Jessica’s work and to find out more go to:

Website: [www.jessicahartshorn.com](http://www.jessicahartshorn.com)

Instagram: @jessi\_illustrates



[www.rugbyliteraryfestival.co.uk](http://www.rugbyliteraryfestival.co.uk)

• RUGBY •  
ARTISTS  
&  
MAKERS

These books have been created by seven artists  
from Rugby Artists and Makers Network, with  
support from Rugby First.

## **Gillian Cross** **The Demon Headmaster**

**Imagine if your school headmaster could hypnotise  
schoolchildren with his eyes and make everyone behave.  
Scary!**

**Imagine if he could hypnotise the teachers and parents and  
everyone else too - and tried to take over the world and make  
everyone behave just as he wants them to... It's a good thing  
that SPLAT are there to foil his plans!**

**Clare Pentlow** creates her artwork through the exploration of paper constantly refining and looking for perfection whilst embracing the versatile qualities of strength and fragility. Through precision hand cutting and folding, her pieces evolve over time through methodical repetitive motions building layer upon layer resulting in highly textured mesmerising pieces of art which draw the viewer in. The methodical approach Clare takes is rooted in her love of maths and science continually being inspired by patterns in nature.

Continued...

Clare's work has been exhibited across the UK winning the Rugby Open in 2013 and the Best Exhibitor Award in the Made in the Middle exhibition a touring exhibition showcasing the best Craft across the Midlands in 2016.

Clare's work has also attracted international attention with commissions coming from French fashion house Hermes and Lexus while her work was also selected for the 250th Summer Exhibition at the Royal Academy of Arts. In 2022 Clare became an Associate at the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists.

Clare also runs paper cutting/sculpture workshops introducing participants to different ways of working with paper. She thrives on working with people and challenging them creatively helping them on a journey exploring the potential of themselves and the material.

[www.cjpdesigns.co.uk](http://www.cjpdesigns.co.uk) @cjpdesigns

**Gillian Cross** is an author of children's books who lived near Rugby.

She won the 1990 Carnegie Medal for *Wolf* and the 1992 Whitbread Children's Book Award for *The Great Elephant Chase* but she is most well known for *The Demon Headmaster*, which has also been made into a TV series.

The first *Demon Headmaster* book was published in 1982 and the eighth in 2019. It was made into a TV series in 1996 and a sequel series was made in 2019.

Dinah is the main character in the books. She is an orphan who is fostered by the Hunter family, who have two boys. Dinah finds that her new school is ruled by The Demon Headmaster who, when he takes off his dark glasses, can use his eyes to hypnotise people.

Dinah is very intelligent and The Demon Headmaster tries to use her in his plans. Luckily, a few children are immune to his hypnotism and, along with Dinah and the Hunter boys, they work together as SPLAT - the Society for the Protection of our Lives Against Them - to combat The Headmaster's plans. After a shaky start with the Hunter family, Dinah is adopted by them.

Before Cross became a full-time author she had various jobs including working for an MP. She now lives in Dorset where she has been a Labour Party candidate.



[www.rugbyliteraryfestival.co.uk](http://www.rugbyliteraryfestival.co.uk)



These books have been created by seven artists from Rugby Artists and Makers Network, with support from Rugby First.

## **Lewis Carroll**

**27 January 1832 – 14 January 1898**

### **Alice's Adventures in Wonderland: The Lost Chapter**

**A girl falls down a rabbit hole into a magical world, where food and drink can make her change size. Where creatures talk (though they don't always make sense) and a dangerous Queen shouts "off with their heads"! Curiouser and Curiouser!**

**Lewis Carroll is a writer whose name and work we are certain you will have heard of, not least because Rugby Yarn Bombers\* recently covered our town with wonderful hand-made, stitched, knitted and crocheted characters from his most famous book "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland", published in 1865.**

**Jennie Fifield** has predominantly worked in paper sculpture and textiles for theatre, film and animation.

Jennie has run various creative workshops and really enjoys working in public art. She also loves silversmithing and drawing!

\*Rugby Yarn Bombers' Wasp in a Wig is currently in Rugby School's museum, where it can be seen as part of a School tour.

**Lewis Carroll’s** “lost chapter”, “A Wasp in a Wig”, didn’t make it into the book and one reason given for this is because the illustrator John Tenniel declared that “A wasp in a wig is altogether beyond the appliances of art”. At Alice’s request the wasp explains, in rhyme, how he came to wear a wig:

“When I was young, my ringlets waved And curled and crinkled on my head: And then they said ‘You should be shaved, And wear a yellow wig instead.’ But when I followed their advice, And they had noticed the effect, They said I did not look so nice As they had ventured to expect. They said it did not fit, and so It made me look extremely plain:	But what was I to do, you know? My ringlets would not grow again. So now that I am old and gray, And all my hair is nearly gone, They take my wig from me and say ‘How can you put such rubbish on?’ And still, whenever I appear, They hoot at me and call me ‘Pig!’ And that is why they do it, dear, Because I wear a yellow wig.”
--	--

Carroll’s real name was Charles Lutwidge Dodgson. He attended Rugby School for three years from 1846, but he didn’t like it much: "I cannot say ... that any earthly considerations would induce me to go through my three years again". He is said to have fought to protect younger boys from bullying - so there he has a similarity with Tom Brown, who features in another of our books.

He perhaps wished to forget school, but the School remembers him with a plaque in the School’s chapel, which has a border of images from the book, including the well known white rabbit. He also has a memorial in Poet’s Corner in Westminster Abbey in London.

Carroll liked to invent words. If you have ever chortled, or galumphed, you have only done so because Carroll invented those words, which appear in his nonsense poem Jabberwocky.

Although we know him as a writer, he really excelled in maths and it was this subject that he went on to study at Oxford University. He was a very talented student but was often distracted and didn’t always work hard. Nevertheless, he went on to become a lecturer in maths at Oxford, using puzzles and games to help students engage and understand. His mathematical work included geometry, algebra, logic, alternative voting systems and recreational mathematics. Curiouser and curiouser!