

WIGTOWN SPRING WEEKEND

3-5 MAY 2025

Welcome to Wigtown Spring Book Weekend

A Celebration of Literature and Community

Dear Book Lovers,

Welcome to the Wigtown Spring Book Weekend, a celebration of literature, creativity, and the vibrant community that makes Wigtown Scotland's National Book Town. We are thrilled to have you join us for a weekend filled with engaging author talks and stimulating discussions.

However, it is not just about books; it is about the connections we make, the ideas we share, and the inspiration we find in every conversation and story. So, enjoy the festival, make new friends, and let the pages of countless books inspire and delight you.

Happy reading!

Jacqui Robertson

Chair of The Association of Wigtown Booksellers

P.s. A heartfelt thank you to all the volunteers, sponsors, and participants who make the Wigtown Spring Book Weekend possible. Your support and enthusiasm are the cornerstones of our success.

ALL WEEKEND

The Story Boat

ReadingLasses Garden

10am-4pm | Sat 3 - Mon 5 | Free

Climb aboard the Story Boat, created by traditional boat builder Gail McGarva from the upturned fishing boat 'Vera' of 1923. Enjoy her story, memory objects and miniature world of the sea.

Makers Market

The Hut at ReadingLasses

10am-4pm | Sat 3 & Sun 4 | Free

In collaboration with Nest we are delighted to bring you our first makers market of the year. Browse through a curated mix of art and craft stalls from makers and artists from across the region.

WITH THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS

At the Sign of the Dragon

Byre Books

Anne Dunford

Faodail

The Old Bank Bookshop

ReadingLasses

The Smiddy Accommodation

Stranraer & District Local

History Trust

David Sumner

Wigtown Community Shop

Wigtown Emporium

SATURDAY 3 MAY

WALK

Paul Tarling & John Atkinson

Birds and a Bard

Meet outside County Buildings

9am | £5

Listen out for spring birdsong and enjoy poems inspired by our avian neighbours.

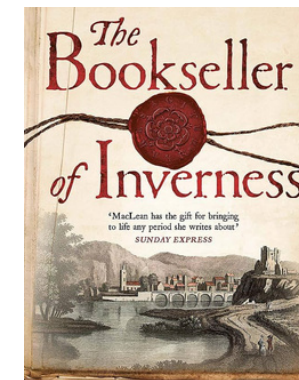
DEMONSTRATION

Jollypotter

Nest, 13 South Main St

11am and 1pm | Unticketed

Join Jonathan (Jollypotter) of The Great Pottery Throw Down at Nest as he demonstrates throwing at the wheel.



Shona MacLean

In conversation

County Buildings, Main Hall

12 noon | £12

Her books have earned her critical acclaim and loyal readers. Join the author of *The Bookseller of Inverness*, as she talks to Helen McKay about her journey into the world of historical fiction.

Magi Gibson

Winner of Wigtown Poetry Prize

County Buildings, The Hub

12 noon | £8

Magi draws inspiration from the little things that affect the big issues in our lives to write poetry that is both timeless and modern.

WALK

Steve Munroe

Wigtown Heroes

Meet at Wigtown Top Cemetery

12 noon | £5

Stroll through Wigtown's history, honouring lost fathers, brothers, sons, a deserter-turned-hero, a missing Commando, and ties to *A Bridge Too Far*.

Elaine Barton & Julia MacDonald

The Great War at Sea

County Buildings, Main Hall

1.30pm | £8

Julia MacDonald and Elaine Barton discuss WW1 U-Boat activity near Wigtownshire, featuring the Bayano, Baralong incident, and U-Boat surrenders in Lochryan.

Karen Campbell

This Bright Life

County Buildings, Main Hall

3pm | £12

Three strangers - one moment. *This Bright Life* is heartbreaking, yet brimming with hope and humour. A story about messy lives and the many hands it takes to build a boy.

Crystal Maw

Migrations

County Buildings, The Hub

3pm | £5

Learn why winter geese leave as African migrants like swallows arrive. Crystal explains the natural pressures that make these journeys necessary for survival.

Shaun Bythell & Glenn Cooksley

The Diarists

County Buildings, Main Hall

4.30pm | £8

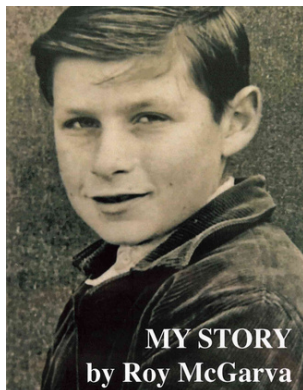
The bestselling writer and former BBC journalist join forces to read extracts from their diaries covering the worlds of bookselling and Scottish politics.



SATURDAY 3 MAY SUNDAY 4 MAY

Helen Graham
The Real Mackay
County Buildings, The Hub
4.30pm | £8

This critically acclaimed debut novel is based on the life of Charles Mackay - favourite stage comedian of Sir Walter Scott.



Roy McGarva
My Story
County Buildings, Main Hall
7pm | £8

An inspiring journey from poverty to resilience, detailing time in the RAF, a return to Galloway, and the relentless fight against the tax authorities.

WORKSHOP
Sarah Stewart
Creative Bookbinding
County Buildings, The Hub
7pm-9pm | £25

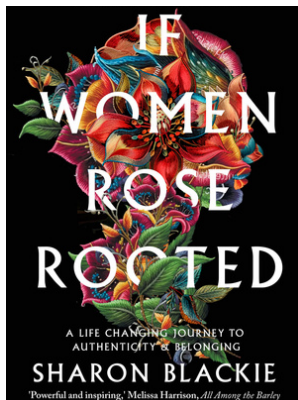
Learn how to create your own artists books and zines. Leave with a handful of books and the knowledge to make them again.

Renita Boyle
Words for the Birds
Nest, 13 South Main St
7pm | Free but ticketed
Fly Furthest Far Away with the Eagle and the Wren: a story, a song, a poem, a lullaby, a cosy cuppa and an optional hug await.

Marion McGowan
The Priest's Pool
County Buildings, The Hub
10.30am | £5

Set in 1870s Scotland, change clashes with tradition. *The Priest's Pool* weaves a tale of resilience, family, and hope.

Sharon Blackie
Wise Women
County Buildings, Main Hall
12 noon | £12
Exploring themes of women's empowerment, the power of myth and folklore, and the connection between personal and environmental healing. Through bestselling books like *If Women Rose Rooted* and *Hagitude*, Dr Sharon Blackie reimagines traditional narratives to inspire contemporary solutions.



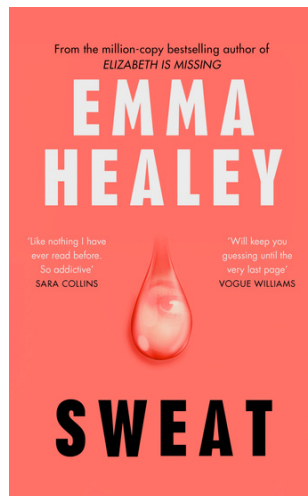
Jack Sloan and David Sumner
Alasdair Gray: Magnificent Citizen
County Buildings, The Hub
12 noon | £8

An illustrated talk on Alasdair Gray, "the father figure of the renaissance in Scottish literature and art", who began his landmark novel, *Lanark*, when studying at Glasgow School of Art.

SUNDAY 4 MAY

Kirsten MacQuarrie
Remember the Rowan
County Buildings, Main Hall
1.30pm | £8
Longlisted for the Highland Prize and the People's Book Prize, Kirsten MacQuarrie's debut novel is inspired by the true story of Kathleen Raine and Gavin Maxwell's 'some-requited' love.

Tim Cowen
Badger Tales
County Buildings, The Hub
1.30pm | £5
Writer and performer Tim Cowen volunteers for the charity Scottish Badgers. His novel *Banquet of the Beasts* is a truly original story mixing politics, fantasy and the natural world.



Emma Healey
Sweat
County Buildings, Main Hall
3pm | £12
The bestselling author of *Elizabeth is Missing* explores themes of exercise addiction and coercion, asking how far one would go for revenge on an abusive ex.

Sandy McKnight
The Celtic Rites of Spring
County Buildings, The Hub
3pm | £5
Scotland's most tattooed man explores the rituals, traditions and folklore surrounding spring in pre-Christian cultures both in Scotland and across the world.

Bob Frith
Horse and Bamboo
County Buildings, Main Hall
4.30pm | £8
Founder and director of Britain's only horse-drawn touring theatre company tells of 40 years bringing his unique theatre to rural areas from the Hebrides to Hungary and Slovakia.

Breagle Martin
Kirkyard Chronicles
New Chapter Books
4.30pm | Free but ticketed
Uncover the fascinating, surprising, and heart-wrenching life stories of the people buried in the local old kirkyards.

MONDAY 5 MAY

Roy Walter
A Harbour Goes to war
New Chapter Books
3pm | Free but ticketed
Originally published in 2000, *A Harbour Goes to War* has been reissued. Roy Walter talks about the history of the Mulberry Harbour in Garieston - the story of a local village and the impact it had on the war effort in WW2.

Celebrate May Day in Book Town
McCuffie Memorial Gardens
12noon-4pm | Free, unticketed
Live music, storytelling, barbeque or bring a picnic. Explore the wrapped bookshelf for literary surprises, and soak up the festive atmosphere.

HOW TO BOOK

Online
Secure ticketing via wigtownbookfestival.com
24 hours a day, 7 days a week
By phone
During office hours (Mon-Fri 10am-4pm) on **01988 403222**



DAVY BROWN'S 75TH BIRTHDAY EXHIBITION

The Conference Room
26 South Main Street
10am-4pm
Sat 3 - Mon 26 May

Mayflower
Community events over Spring Weekend at Wigtown Hall.
For more information visit wigtownhall.uk/mayflower

FOOD & DRINK

Books & Bakes, 6 Bank Street
10am-4pm Sat and Mon; 9.30am-1.30pm Sun
Cafe Melba, Bladnoch Distillery
10am-4pm Sat
Cafe Rendezvous, 2 Agnew Crescent
10am-6pm Sat; 10.30am-3.30pm Sun
Cobwebs, 31 South Main Street
Sat & Sun 12noon-5pm; Mon 12noon-4pm
The Frying Scotsman, 24 North Main Street
4pm-8pm Sat
The Galloway Bar, 24 South Main Street
12.30pm-1am Sat; 12.30pm-11.30pm Sun; 1pm-11.30pm Mon
North Street Deli, 2 North Main Street
8am-5pm Sat; 9am-5pm Sun; 7am-2.30pm Mon.
The Wigtown Ploughman, 30 South Main Street
See website for opening times (thewigtownploughman.co.uk)
Pop Up Bar, 4 South Main Street
4pm-11pm Fri; 1pm-11pm Sat-Mon. Food served until 9.30pm.
ReadingLasses, 17 South Main Street
10am-5pm Sat-Mon.



ASSOCIATION OF
WIGTOWN
BOOKSELLERS