

SUSSEX BOOKENDS

A WEEKLY CELEBRATION OF THE SUSSEX CHARACTER

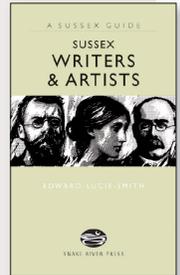
As December approaches it is time to herald in the festive season, and what better way than taking a trip over to the lovely downland village of Alfriston to watch the Christmas trees lights switched on at 4pm today. Father Christmas will be doing the honours, so all should run smoothly.

Next weekend the village celebrates with two days of special events called Comforts and Joys. Various treats have been arranged to delight and entertain visitors. Why not take a ride through the village on a shire horse wagon, guess the weight of a Christmas cake or take a guided history walk through the pretty twittens? They'll be quizzes, crafts, fairs, a lucky dip and carols (in French and English!) as well as the chance to ask the Snow Queen to hang your secret wish on the Christmas tree. The local antique shop will be offering valuable advice on looking after your antiques and you can even get your carving knife sharpened in time for the turkey!

Quiz

- 1 Daisy Ashford left Sussex and moved to Norfolk or Cornwall?
- 2 Who painted the comic allegory *The Prince Regent Awakening the Spirit of Brighton*?
- 3 The Winnie the Pooh stories are associated with which Sussex forest?
- 4 Which Sussex author wrote *The Jungle Book*?
- 5 Who wrote *The Sussex Vampire*?

Email your answers, along with your name and address to: editorial@snakeriverpress.co.uk. The sender of the first set of correct answers received wins a copy of *Sussex Writers & Artists* by Edward Lucie-Smith worth £8.99. The correct answers will be posted at www.snakeriverpress.co.uk next Saturday.



Live & learn

Daisy Ashford's childhood masterpiece is often quoted, but her turn of phrase is neat enough to stand up to repetition. It's much better than her spelling or her punctuation. Here are a few gems.

'My life will be sour grapes and ashes without you.'

'I certainly love you madly, you are to me like a Heathen god...'

'I am not quite a gentleman, but you would hardly notice it.'

His bathroom had 'a tip-bason and a hose thing for washing your head.'

'My own idear is that these things are as piffle before the wind.'

Sussex Celebrity

Daisy Ashford 1881-1972



Daisy Ashford, without a doubt now one of the best-known Sussex authors, wrote her celebrated book *The Young Visitors* in 1890, when she was only nine years old (hence the spelling) and living in Lewes. The manuscript lay in a drawer for nearly 30 years, until it was finally published in 1919, with a preface by J.M. Barrie.

The sheer confidence of the narrative - a child's eye view of English upper-class society - and what seemed to be its sharp satirical edge caused many people to believe that the text had been written by James Barrie himself.

Though *The Young Visitors* is not - contrary to report - the only novel or novella that Daisy produced (there was another called *The Hangman's Daughter*, in addition to a number of short stories). She stopped writing when she was in her teens, though she continued to tell entertaining stories - inventing lives for people she observed in a teashop or elsewhere. Taken from *Sussex Writers & Artists* by Edward Lucie-Smith.

Lost words

“ In his *A Dictionary of Sussex Dialect* the Reverend W.D. Parish gives two phrases in connection with the traditional reading of banns prior to a wedding. This should be a joyous occasion but he recounts the following disturbing superstition.

Church-bawled, or Church-cried: Having the banns published in church. The tradition in Sussex is that if a person goes to church to hear himself cried, his children will be born deaf and dumb.

If you know of other disturbing folklore or superstitions we'd love to hear from you, email them to editorial@snakeriverpress.co.uk

Out & About in Sussex

So much happens at this time of year that it is easy to overlook some magical events. One that caught my eye and seems unmissable is the world premiere of *A Grand Night Out* with Wallace and Gromit.

The East Sussex Music Service will be playing a specially devised live score to the Wallace and Gromitt favourites *A Grand Day Out*

and *A Close Shave* (shown in High Definition) at the De La Warr Pavilion in Bexhill-on-Sea.

There will be two performances, at 3pm and 7pm, on December 20, so make a note in your diaries and call **01424 229111** to book tickets or visit www.dlwp.com for more details. Adult tickets cost £18 and family ones £28.

Lancing College Chapel

Those who regularly drive along the A27 at Shoreham cannot fail to be impressed by the massive Gothic Revival Chapel of Lancing College, looking slightly too big for the landscape it dominates. Yet it might have been an even more towering sight.

Claimed to be the largest school chapel in Europe, it was begun in 1868 and built

by the father-and-son team of Richard Cromwell Carpenter and his son Richard. It is 53 metres high, with foundations that go down 21 metres. It is still missing the tower originally planned for it, which would have added yet another 53 metres to its height. It is said to have the largest rose window in the country after York Minster.