



BfK Briefing ? March 2011

[187](#) [1]

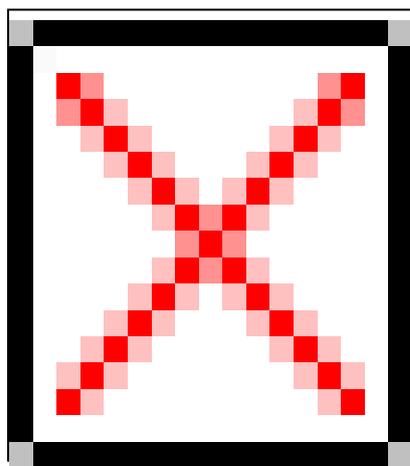
Article Category:

BfK Briefing

Byline:

Exhibition * Awards

Obituaries



Brian Jacques

1939 ? 2011

Jake Hope writes?

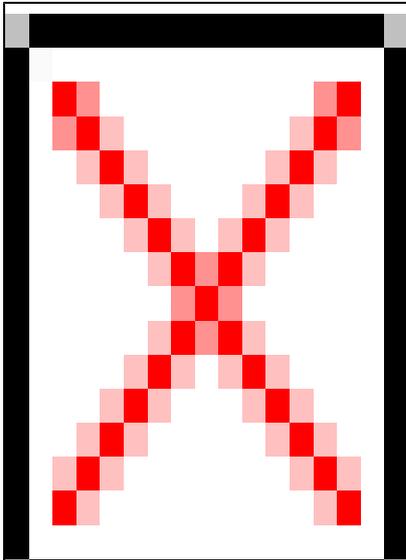
One of the brightest stars in the firmament of children?s books, the well-loved author of the popular ?Redwall? series, Brian Jacques, died of a heart attack aged 71 on 5 February 2011.

Descended from Irish stock, James Brian Jacques was born in Kirkdale, Liverpool on 15 June 1939. He grew up around the dockland areas of the city and attended St John?s School. Jacques was a great fan of the boy?s own adventures which his father, a lorry driver by trade, would read to him. Favourites included Stevenson, Haggard, Burroughs and Ballantyne, whose styles would come to influence his own writing for children.

Unbeknownst to Jacques, his friend Alan Durband, himself an author, sent a Jacques manuscript to his publisher lauding it as the finest children?s book he had ever read. Jacques was quickly offered a five book publication deal and the founding stone of the ?Redwall? sequence was placed. ?Redwall? started a series of novels that would traverse the histories of the Mossflower Woods and their environs. The woods and their now famous abbey, Redwall, were a world inhabited by anthropomorphised mice, rats and other small creatures. The tales are hearty, swashbuckling yarns of good triumphing over evil and are replete with battles, Machiavellian sub-plots, sumptuous feasts and a varied assortment of endearing or treacherous characters.

Jacques was a consummate raconteur with a mischievous sense of humour and perfect comic timing. This belied the sensitivity, care and desire the writer had to always produce the best for children and young people. These high ideals and his interest in storytelling and imagination were to span every part of his career and his writing.

[Click here for the unabridged version of **Brian Jacques'** obituary.](#) [2]



Dick King-Smith

27 March 1922 ? 4 January 2011

Laura Fraine writes?

Children's author Dick King-Smith has died in his sleep aged 88, following a long period of poor health. Best known as the author of **The Sheep-Pig** (1983), the story that was adapted into the 1995 film **Babe**, King-Smith wrote more than 100 children's books, published in 21 languages and is beloved of children around the world. Yet, it was not until he was 56 years old that he began to write for children.

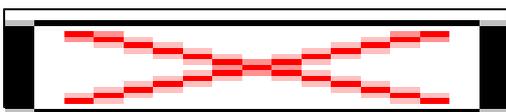
Ronald Gordon King-Smith (Dick was a much-preferred childhood nickname) was born into gentry in 1922 in the village of Bitton, Gloucestershire. He was to live in the surrounding area for almost all his life and much later his writing would become synonymous with this unchanging English countryside.

After 20 years as a farmer, Dick found himself unemployed. He tried sales and factory work before finally beginning to retrain as a primary teacher, aged 49, at the same time as his elder daughter Juliet. It was a job he found rewarding and for the next eight years teaching would be his vocation. One hot summer he spent the six-week school holiday writing a children's story to pass the time. **The Fox Busters** (1978), about a brood of fearless hens taking their revenge upon a fox, was taken up for publication by Gollancz and immediately well received.

He may have come to writing late in life, but for the next 20 years Dick King-Smith, now a full-time author, wrote with zeal, sometimes producing eight or nine books a year across a range of publishers. His final book, **The Mouse Family Robinson**, was published in 2007.

[Click here for the unabridged version of Dick King-Smith's obituary.](#) [3]

Exhibition



Once Upon A Wartime: Classic War Stories for Children

11 February ? 30 October 2011 at the Imperial War Museum London

This family-friendly exhibition takes a fresh look at five of the best-loved books written for children about conflict ? **The Silver Sword** by Ian Serraillier, **Carrie's War** by Nina Bawden, **The Machine Gunners** by Robert Westall, **War Horse** by Michael Morpurgo and **Little Soldier** by Bernard Ashley.

Through stunning life-size sets, intricate scale models and interactive exhibits, families are invited to enter the

imaginary worlds of these five classic war stories. From the bleak landscape of no man's land in **War Horse** to the imposing tower blocks of London's gang warfare in **Little Soldier**, the exhibition takes visitors on a journey through conflicts from the First World War to the present day.

To mark this celebration of children's war literature, the Imperial War Museum has commissioned a new short story by author Michael Morpurgo to be illustrated by Michael Foreman. Published in Spring 2011, the book takes its inspiration from a unique object in the Museum's Collections. In addition, there will be a children's war literature festival at Imperial War Museum during August 2011 with a series of author-led lectures, discussions and workshops.

Awards

Waterstone's Children's Book Prize 2011

The winner is debut novel **Artichoke Hearts** by Sita Brahmachari (Macmillan), an insightful, honest novel exploring the delicate balance, and often injustice, of life and death ? but at its heart is a celebration of friendship, culture ? and life.

The other shortlisted books were Curtis Jobling's **Wereworld: Rise of the Wolf** (Puffin), **A Beautiful Lie** by Irfan Master (Bloomsbury), **Mortlock** by Jon Mayhew (Bloomsbury), **The Memory Cage** by Ruth Eastham (Scholastic), **Tall Story** by Candy Gourlay (David Fickling Books), **The Pain Merchants: The Healing Wars** by Janice Hardy (HarperCollins), **When You Reach Me** by Rebecca Stead (Andersen) and **Fantastic Frankie and the Brain-Drain Machine** by Anna Kemp (Simon & Schuster).

The 2010 Early Years Awards

The winner of **The Best Book for babies under one year old** is **I Love My Mummy** by Giles Andreae, illustrated by Emma Dodd (Orchard Books).

The winner of **The Best Picture Book for children up to five years old** is **One Smart Fish** by Chris Wormell (Jonathan Cape).

The winner of **Best Emerging Illustrator for children up to five years old** is **The Django** by Levi Pinfold (Templar).

The 2011 Marsh Award for Children's Literature in Translation

The winner is Martin Cleaver for his translation of **Letters to Anyone and Everyone** by Toon Tellegen, illustrated by Jessica Ahlberg (Boxer Books).

The other shortlisted titles were:

The Pasta Detectives by Andreas Steinhöfel translated from German by Chantal Wright (The Chicken House)

No and Me by Delphine de Vigan translated from French by George Miller (Bloomsbury Publishing)

David's Story by Stig Dalager translated from Danish by Frances Østerfelt and Cheryl Robson (Aurora Metro Publications)

Awarded biannually since 1996, The Marsh Award was founded to highlight books made accessible to young people through translation, and to address a situation in the UK in which less than 3% of work published for children has been from the non-English speaking world. It aims to emphasise translation as an art.

Page Number:

15

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[2] <http://savfkn.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/186/childrens-books/articles/obituaries/obituary-brian-jacques>

[3] <http://savfkn.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/186/childrens-books/articles/obituaries/obituary-dick-king-smith>