



Books for Keeps Brilliant Bookshops: Tales on Moon Lane

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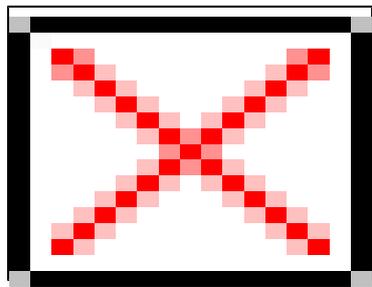
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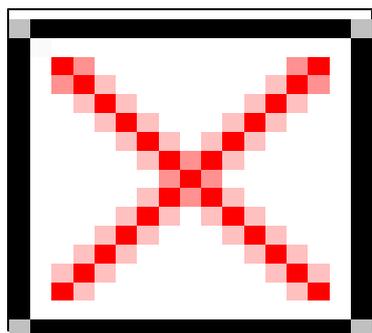
Tales on Moon Lane

There were cars floating down Half Moon Lane last August; a water main had burst, flooding the shops and houses. Three months on, repaired and rewired, **Tales on Moon Lane**, one of the country's top children's bookshops is back in business. Owner Tamara Macfarlane takes us round.



We opened **Tales on Moon Lane** almost 10 years ago, we'll be celebrating our tenth anniversary next April. I'd been a teacher and literacy co-ordinator, and was always saying to parents, 'If you want your children to read, you need to take them into a good bookshop?'. When my daughter was born, I decided to set up the shop, it really was as much for her as for anyone else!

We're on the borders of Southwark and Lambeth here and it's a really mixed community. I was lucky enough to be brought up surrounded by books ? I'm eternally grateful to Blackwells in Oxford, which was my local bookshop ? but my husband wasn't. If you're not familiar with bookshops, it can be quite a big step just to come in. The parents at the school I taught in were quite intimidated by bookshops too, so from the very start I was determined to get as many people through the door as possible. I decided to stock toys and non-book items alongside the books, to encourage everyone to come in. The shop isn't somewhere that belongs to 'other people?', it's just a fun space where there happen to be books. Often now, it's a case of children dragging their parents in, rather than the other way round, and that makes us all really happy!



Events are also absolutely vital to us. We're hand-selling every day, but a good author visit can be the key that opens the world of books to a child: I still remember a trip I took to the Puffin Bookclub as a little girl, and the excitement of

meeting one of the Mr Men ? it was a really formative experience for me. We run three weeks of shop events, one each half term. We've had great authors come ? Derek Landy flew from Ireland specially for our The Sun Comes out on Moon Lane festival.

We also help run lots of school book weeks and events. Last year we worked with **Inspire Me Education** on a festival of reading for children in Southwark in association with the **Dulwich Picture Gallery**. Thanks to donations and funding, every child that attended received a free book, all 2500 of them. We're waiting to hear about funding now for next year. We've also been involved with the **Southwark Schools Reading Festival**, with the **Telegraph's Word Up** hosted by Alleyn's School and many more.

Our school links are really important to us, and **Moon Lane Education** is a big part of our business (being an ex teacher really helps). We run inset training for teachers, as well as sessions for parents on the importance of reading for pleasure, and we produce Recommended Reading Lists as a resource for primary school teachers. You can download these from our [website](#) [3].

?What book can you recommend for my child who won't read? is one of the questions we get asked regularly. Often, when you talk to the child in question it turns out they are reading, just not the books their parent wants them to read! Usually you can find a book that they will both approve of, it's about asking the right questions, and being diplomatic.

These are some of the books we'll be recommending this Christmas:**In Bloom** by Matthew Crow, which is an absolutely brilliant read for teenagers; **Goth Girl** by Chris Riddell and **Fortunately the Milk** by Neil Gaiman; **Don't Eat This Book** by David Sinden and Nikalas Catlow and **Matilda, the Anniversary Slipcase Edition; I Capture the Castle** by Dodie Smith (the new hardback edition) and **Professor Astro Cat's Frontiers of Space** by Dominic Walliman and Ben Newman; **Wild** by Emily Hughes; **Walk this World** by Lotta Niemenen; **Maps** by Aleksandra Mizielska and Daniel Mizielski and **Flip Flap Farm** by Axel Scheffler. (Manager George Hanratty adds Tamara's book **Amazing Esme** to the list too!)

We've survived not one but two floods in the last ten years, but we're most lucky in our wonderful customers, who make it all worthwhile.

[In Bloom](#) [4], Matthew Crow, Much-in-Little, 9 78-1472105516, £12.99 hbk

Goth Girl by Chris Riddell, Macmillan, 978-0230759800, £9.99 hbk

[Fortunately the Milk](#) [5] by Neil Gaiman, Bloomsbury, 978-1408841761, £10.99 hbk

Don't Eat This Book by David Sinden and Nikalas Catlow, Red Fox, 978-1849417785, £5.99

Matilda (Anniversary Slipcase Edition) Roald Dahl, Puffin, 978-0141346793, £20

I Capture the Castle Dodie Smith Bodley Head, 978-1782300229, £12.99

Professor Astro Cat's Frontiers of Space by Dominic Walliman and Ben Newman, Flying Eye Books, 978-1909263079, £15.99

[Amazing Esme](#) [6] by Tamara Macfarlane Hodder Children's Books 978-0340999936, £4.99

Wild by Emily Hughes Flying Eye Books, 978-1909263086, £11.99

Walk this World by Lotta Niemenen, Big Picture Press, 978-1848778245, £14.99

Maps by Aleksandra Mizielska and Daniel Mizielski, Big Picture Press, 978-1848773011, £20

Flip Flap Farm by Axel Scheffler Nosy Crow, 978-0857632456, £7.99

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