

Welcome to the June newsletter!

Dearest Ringwood Readers,

What sweltering month it has been! Here at Ringwood HQ we have been busy behind the scenes getting our upcoming titles ready, but that didn't stop us holding exciting events all over the UK with some of our authors.

But first...

Volunteers Wanted

Do you love books? Retired or have time on your hands? Want to contribute to Scotland's creative sector? Then we want you!

**Like books? Have a spare
few hours a week?**

**We Want
You!**



Interested? Email for more info:
isobel.freeman.ringwood@gmail.com

Ringwood has managed to survive as a publisher by utilising an intern model where we have provided experience and support to young graduates and undergraduates in exchange for their commitment and hard work. This has been managed by a couple of older (retired) volunteers who are also unpaid. As Ringwood grows we need to share the load and are seeking more older volunteers to help support this model.

This opportunity offers a lot of fun and excitement, the opportunity to produce high quality books and work with talented authors and the chance to mentor and learn from young people starting out in their career.

We are looking for people who could commit to around 8 hours per week to work on a wide range of tasks depending on their interests (reading submissions, proofreading, promotion and marketing).

If this is you, please contact:

isobel.freeman.ringwood@gmail.com

We can't wait to welcome you to the team!



Some of the Ringwood team at the Glasgow Mela 2023

Ringwood well-represented at Aye Write 2023

By Sandy Jamieson

Ringwood was represented with distinction at this year's Glasgow Aye Write Book Festival. Ringwood's Senior Operations Manager Isobel Freeman participated in a panel event designed to help hopeful writers learn how to get published.

The panel, chaired by Andrew Meehan of Strathclyde University, himself an author, also composed of Caro Clarke, a Portobello Literary Agent; and good friend of Ringwood, Vikki Reilly, representing Publishing Scotland.



Isobel, drew on her considerable experience of being Chief Editor and her many years of active involvement in all aspects of editorial work from manuscript assessment and selection, editing of books, proofreading and copyediting, to providing advice to would-be authors on how to navigate the submissions systems and other barriers between them and the publication.

Isobel explained how publishers operate systems to select publishable books from the many manuscripts sent to them; and shared the best ways to navigate through these systems. Caro Clarke explained how Literary Agents have taken over many of the initial screening and editing roles traditionally carried out by publishers, but also how difficult it was for new unknown writers to find an agent prepared to represent them. Vikki Reilly provided an overview of the situation in Scotland, where her organisation represents over 80 publishers including Ringwood.

After the Panel presentations, a lively question and answer session followed, where Isobel was once more able to give good advice about the best 'do's and don'ts' drawn from her extensive experience.

A *Bodysnatcher* Event: The Edinburgh Dungeons.

By Emma Clarke & Megan Gibson.

On the 1st of June, Ringwood further celebrated the release of Carol Margaret Davison's *Bodysnatcher*, with a special evening event held at The Edinburgh Dungeons.

Seated in a replica of the infamous Dr. Knox's Anatomy Theatre, the event began with an introduction by the chair, Megan Gibson, who discussed Carol's novel in detail. This was followed by a fantastic introduction to the topic of Burke and Hare, by fellow Ringwood author, Tom Wood.

Tom, author of *Ruxton: The First Modern Murder*, discussed the relevance of the event being hosted in the Anatomy Theatre. Utilising his knowledge of both policing and Scottish history, Tom presented a backdrop of context for the audience, discussing the state of policing in Edinburgh around that time, and the history of bodysnatching.



Author Carol Margaret Davison at the Dr. Knox Anatomy Theatre

Following this introduction, Carol presented a fascinating 20-minute lecture on the Anatomy Craze, both in Scotland and Canada. Furthermore, Carol discussed the controversial topic of the sensationalism of true crime, highlighting the importance of remembering that the victims involved were real people. This was punctuated by Carol reading out the names of each known victim of the Burke and Hare murders, providing an emotionally poignant moment for the audience and author alike.

The lecture concluded with a Q&A session hosted by the event chair, in which the audience engaged with topics of narrative, themes of the Gothic, and historical accuracy. The turnout was excellent, with an enthusiastic and engaged audience.

Ringwood would like to thank both Tom Wood for his generous addition to the event, and The Edinburgh Dungeons, for allowing us to use their fantastic space.



Carol Margaret Davison, Tom Wood and some of the Ringwood team at the Dr Knox Anatomy Theatre in the Edinburgh Dungeons.

Bodysnatcher is available [here!](#)

Bodysnatcher: Walk and Talk Event 3/6/23 **By Rosie Hall.**

On Saturday 3rd June, Ringwood held a 'Walk and Talk' event to mark the launch of Carol Margaret Davison's *Bodysnatcher*. The event took the form of a guided walking tour around Edinburgh, stopping off at key places where the novel is set to learn a little about the history of the West Port murders, and to hear readings from the author herself.

The historical parts of the walk were delivered by Victoria Macfie, a tour guide based at the Stevenson House, esteemed Edinburgh B&B and events space. Ringwood were so delighted to involve The Stevenson House in this event. The house was the childhood home of Robert Louis Stevenson, who was mentioned by Carol as being a key influence in inspiring her Gothic vision of Edinburgh.

We were joined on the tour by Stevenson House guests, fellow Ringwood authors, Edinburgh book enthusiasts, and- most importantly- the elusive Scottish sunshine!



***Bodysnatcher*: International Gothic Summer School**

By Rosie Watts

Carol Margaret Davison certainly made the most of her time in the UK. After her departure from Scotland, Carol was invited as a guest speaker at the International Gothic Summer School held at Manchester Metropolitan University. Carol not only spoke at multiple lectures, as a specialist in the Gothic field, but also did a literary reading and interview with Dale Townshend, professor of Gothic Literature, about *Bodysnatcher* and the themes the novel explores.

Dale and Carol discussed some very insightful and often moving points found in her debut novel, touching on themes of motherhood, domestic abuse, and trauma, as well as the inspiration that led Carol to reimagine a new untold story of the infamous Burke and Hare murders. A book signing commenced at the end of the event, where Carol was able to discuss her wonderful work further with some of her fans!

Did you miss Carol at her launch events? Don't worry, you can still purchase a copy of *Bodysnatcher* [here](#).

Glasgow Mela 2023

By Mridula Sharma

On Sunday 25th June, Ringwood hosted a series of events at Glasgow Mela in the memory of our author, Leela Soma.



Isobel Freeman, Anjana Sen, Esraa Husain, Aqsa Arif and Mridula Sharma at the BIPOC Writing in Scotland panel.

We are thankful to everyone who attended our events, making it possible for us to attempt to commemorate Leela in a constructive way.



We are particularly grateful to our Open Mic participants, who enabled us to celebrate new writing by Scotland's writers of colour. We hope some of the

participants consider submitting their work to the [2023 Kayva Prize](#), which was inaugurated by Leela last year, and our very own [2023 Ringwood Short Story Competition](#), in which we will inaugurate The Leela Soma Prize.



If you'd like to catch up on Leela's work, you can buy copies of *Murder at the Mela* [here](#).

Event: How to Write & Publish a Book By Vicky McCormick

On Wednesday 28th June Ringwood held a panel with Ringwood author Flora Johnston, titled 'How to Write & Publish a Book'. This discussion at Stockbridge Library in Edinburgh focused on the writing and editing process and was a chance for budding writers to hear from a published author.

Flora shared her experiences of the different stages of writing and editing a book. This newsletter's very own editor, Megan, who is also Ringwood's submissions manager, talked about the process of submitting and editing manuscripts. Flora and Megan also shared their thoughts on what writers should and should not do and what submissions teams are looking for. The event closed with an audience Q&A and opportunity to buy Flora's book [What You Call Free](#).



Author Flora Johnston with Ringwood team Namitha, Vicky and Megan

A great evening had by all. Watch this space for more 'How to..' events!

Get to Know Our Interns: Megan Gibson Introduction & Questions by Vicky McCormick.

Welcome back to another segment of get to know our interns! As many interested in publishing will know, the industry is a difficult and competitive one to get into. As a result, Ringwood wants to give anyone who is willing, the opportunity to gain the necessary experience to kick-start their careers. The intern programme spans across all departments, giving everyone valuable insight into all aspects of publishing.

This month, let us introduce you to our fellow newsletter team member, Megan Gibson! Megan joined Ringwood in November 2022, and has been involved in many exciting projects, such as the launches of *The First of May* and *Bodysnatcher*. Currently, she works as submissions manager, and is the lead editor and proofreader for two upcoming releases.



Tell us about your background and how you came to Ringwood.

I always had an interest in reading and literature. I studied English for my Bachelors at Napier University, spent a few years teaching English as a foreign language abroad, and then got my Masters at the University of Amsterdam in Literature, Culture and Society.

Last year, I decided to pursue teaching English back home in Scotland, but found it wasn't for me. I had always been interested in publishing, so I decided to finally give it a go. I looked through a list of Scottish publishers and found Ringwood, and I've loved it ever since!

What is your role at Ringwood?

I have many exciting roles at Ringwood! I act as submissions manager, meaning that I look at every manuscript submitted to us, and help determine if it meets Ringwood's standards to be considered for publishing. I am also a member of the editorial committee. This committee ultimately decides which manuscripts and authors will be offered a publishing contract from Ringwood - I am very privileged to get to be so involved in the process of publishing from submission to contract! I am also a member of the social media team, our monthly newsletter team, leader of the crime marketing team, and provide author support to George Barnsley, author of *The Lanarkshire Police Chronicles*.

Currently, I am also the lead editor for an upcoming release. This is a fantastic manuscript, and I am so excited to be a part of its creation, and to be working

with its incredible author. Keep your eyes peeled!

What are your favourite genres of books?

While I love a little bit of everything, my favourite genres are horror fiction, true crime, Japanese fiction, and Slavic fiction. It is a real pleasure to intern at Ringwood, because I am able to work with almost all of these genres.

I am currently re-reading *Life is Elsewhere* by Milan Kundera – I love books that focus on the idea of identity and the sense of self.

What do you most enjoy about working in publishing and what are your goals for the future?

I enjoy working in publishing because there is so much to experience and learn. In my current roles, I get to see all kinds of writing, styles, and ideas, and interact with a wide variety of personalities – there is never a dull day! Ringwood is very hands on, so I have also been involved in a lot of marketing, both on social media and events, and had so many opportunities to get involved with various projects. It is such a privilege to work with authors to help get their vision out into the world, and I love the challenge of making every project and event unique.

As for my goals for the future, it is really quite simple: I would love to keep learning and facing new challenges and opportunities. The publishing industry is so vast and varied – I want to grasp every opportunity I can get with both hands and learn as much as possible from those around me!

What would you like to see more of in the Scottish publishing industry?

Much like my colleagues have said in previous months, I would like there to be more opportunities in Scotland for publishing, especially for those who want to get a start in the industry. It is common knowledge that in the UK, the majority of the big publishing companies are in England, meaning that people need to travel to increase their chances of starting their career. I would like to see more of those opportunities in Scotland!

Thank you for your time, Megan!

Do you have a question for Ringwood? Now's your chance!



Whether you're an aspiring author or intrigued intern, we at Ringwood know that there are lots of questions surrounding the publishing industry. We would like to welcome you to our new monthly series: **Ask the Intern!**

In this series, you can ask us anything, ranging from the submissions or editing process, right up to the personal experiences of our own interns. No question is too big or too small. Send us your questions by email or via social media and we'll answer in next month's newsletter.

Rules:

- Please do not pitch a potential manuscript. Please visit our Submissions page for that.
- Please keep questions clear and polite.
- You can ask as many questions as you would like!

Until next time,

Jade McKeogh (Editor), Megan Gibson & Vicky McCormick (Assistant Editors),
and the Ringwood team!

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