

**PerpetualProse.com**

**Presents**

*Carrie King*



**Collaborative Author  
Interview**

## PerpetualProse.com presents: Carrie King – Collaborative Author Interview

### A Word (or two), from Carrie King

When Michael Weir, of Perpetual Prose, sent me your questions, I was staggered at the depth of your thoughts; they were nothing as I had imagined and certainly, some of them, I have never, ever been asked before and I have been asked a few thousand questions, believe me!

I started off just giving a few word answers and then I simply felt that I wasn't giving you all justice. So, I have re-answered them and I hope you appreciate that I have opened up both my heart and home to you all: something I have never done before! Some questions were duplicated, so please don't be sad if you feel I haven't given you the same amount of words as others, your answer is included in the long ones!!! I have asked some of you questions, too, so feel free to reply, if you so wish!

You might find some answers unnecessarily detailed, so just skip them, the details were necessary to me and, as it happens, I am a writer and I always say,

'Why only write two words when you can enjoy writing ten!'

Thank you all so much for taking the time to post a question, I really do appreciate it and you!

I have asked Perpetual Prose to choose the three prize winners: if I had done it, you would have all won prizes! In saying that, if you want to give Perpetual Prose your postal address **using this contact form <http://www.perpetualprose.com/contact>**, I will arrange for you to be sent a free A4 signed copy of one of my illustrations from the Picture Book, just for sending in a question (please state which one you would like: they are listed at the end of this document, if you so wish, you can have them in black & white, as in the Joni-Pip hardback, just let Perpetual Prose know)!

**So now, that makes you all prize winners! Very well done!**

(For those who just might be slightly interested, Prints can be bought mounted at:- [www.framingoriginals.com](http://www.framingoriginals.com))

Here goes then.....

**Barbara Levy**

Q: Where do you get your ideas?

Like most Writers, Barbara, I get them from Life; plus I was always told at school that I never lacked imagination! I listen to conversations going on around me and I watch how people react to each other in different situations. I am a nightmare to go out to dinner with, as I have to write down everything I hear that is funny, poignant, interesting or purely ridiculous. Recently in a restaurant I heard a Mother say,

“Well, knowing how old he is really makes a difference.”

Her daughter replied,

“Don’t be so silly, Mum, it only makes half a difference!”

I had no paper or pen on me, so I quickly grabbed a paper napkin and wrote those words down in lipstick for Book Two (no stealing them)! A great line for Ethelred-Ted, I thought.

**Vicki Cohn**

Q: Where did the name Joni-Pip come from?

Vicki, my Great niece’s name (for whom I wrote the book), is Joni Philipa and her Aunty Trudy used to call her ‘Joni-Pip’ and it stuck! Joni stills signs her name, ‘Joni-Pip’ on Book Signings. If you have one of the books with her signature on it, take care of it, it might be valuable one day!

Here she is on my decking, by the river in Felmersham, Bedfordshire, with South African Illustrator, Mark Taute’s beautiful Water colour he painted for the hardback cover. We were so thrilled when it arrived for us to see, before it was hastily whisked away!



**Jon and Yas Moore**

Q: Do you do have any regime, mental or physical to get the creative juices flowing when writing?

Well, Jon and Yas, I suppose I do. For 8 months of the year, I leave my Buckinghamshire home and go and live in my mobile home by the river. I wrote this e-mail to my writer friend, Gregory Brengauz, a few weeks ago and it is quite typical of most mornings, before I start writing....

‘I woke up this morning to the sight of the November sun streaming into my bedroom window and to the sound of the birds whistling, chattering and singing in their truly melodic Autumnal Tones. When I ventured out, just a little later, clutching a steaming hot cup of English Breakfast Tea (my favourite; the aroma is purely delectable), the dew was heavy on the lush green grass outside my Mobile Home (I love walking barefoot through it: brilliant for producing beautifully clean and fresh feet), and the leaves on the trees were rustling peacefully in the gentle morning breeze. I could hear the soft lapping of the river as it flowed

quietly passed just a few yards away. In front of me, a family of fluffy, brown bunnies hopped around, busying themselves finding the freshest, juiciest grasses to munch on, until their white bobtails disappeared down into the safety of their burrow when a gaggle of noisy geese flew over. I could hear the distant sound of the sheep in the meadow. It was all so breathtaking!

Only after my second cup of tea and a slice of seeded wholemeal toast with a banana, am I ready to start writing! I also swim in the river most days from the beginning of April until the end of October, which invigorates me and puts me in a really creative frame of mind.



**This is where I swim, only a few yards from my Mobile Home in Felmersham**

When I move back to my house (where I am now), I wake up, go downstairs and make a cup of English Breakfast tea, feed my yummy cat, Brewster and my two pet chickens, Maude and Dot (rescued from a Battery Farm), then I check my e-mails and make another cup of tea. Next, I shower (I can't do that before at least two cups of tea....I am a total tea-aholic), then I settle down to write for the morning! Not much of a regime when I am home, is it? This morning I awoke to find a beautiful white blanket of snow all over the garden and the henhouse. The trees look so beautiful.....now that is inspiring, Jon and Yas!

**John Simcock**

Q: If you could meet any writer (dead or alive) who would it be and what question would you ask him/her?

Moses, John and I would ask him if he had any inkling as to how widespread The Ten Commandments would become? (The Bible is still listed as The Top Best Seller, every year)!

**Cadience Buchanan**

Q: What inspired you to write a story for so long and with such dedication?

It was force of circumstances, Cadience. I had no intentions of it taking so long but I am truly thankful for all the help from my family, friends, doctor and therapist and it is to their dedication at keeping me going that I owe so much!

I would like to write about one incident that really changed my life, if I may and it was from a complete stranger!

When my gorgeous husband was killed, I fell immediately into a pit of such unfathomable depth that I saw nothing but gloom and felt nothing but pain. Fortunately or unfortunately, whichever

way you look at it, I was a late baby, so I was mothered by my three older sisters (my oldest sister left home long before I ever had the chance to get to know her; although she still mothered me by sending me a monthly allowance....spoilt or what), and my youngest brother and I had all the privileges of life heaped upon us. I then met and married my husband, who also treated me like a princess, so the spoiling continued, Cadience. While my life was deliriously happy, it meant I never knew what it was like to fend for myself, which was not a good thing. I was crazy in love with a man who did everything for me (before he was killed I had never even put out a dustbin bag for the Refuse Collectors). I cooked and cleaned, obviously but I didn't do anything practical, such as my car maintenance: checking the tyres, topping up water and oil etc., not to mention cleaning it! Consequently, when my husband just suddenly disappeared from my life, I floundered (the only positive thing I can possibly think about losing him, is that I have finally become my own person and have had to fend for myself), I hardly knew how to breathe without him!

I used to sit all day in my dressing gown and watch hours of mindless television. I would go to bed at two in the morning and wake up two hours later at four, get up, put on my dressing gown and switch on the television and stare at it. My poor daughters felt that they had lost both of their parents.

One day, about eighteen months after my husband's death, I was watching some more mind-numbing television. It was a British Film, starring the amazing Sean Bean, messing up his life as a budding football professional. During the story, this beautiful song came on and Cadience, the words struck my heart and made me sit up with a start. I felt the singer was in my lounge and speaking to me personally and telling me to stop, stopping everything from moving on! He sang:-

I want to know how does it feel, behind those eyes of blue?  
You've made your mistakes and now your heart aches, behind those eyes of blue.  
People may say you've had your chance and let it slip away  
But hard as they try, there's a dream that won't die, behind those eyes of blue.  
Maybe once in a while there's a trace of a smile, behind those eyes of blue  
**But it's painfully clear, there's a river of tears, behind those eyes of blue.**  
You know life is too short for compromising.  
**Take a hold of your dream and realise it.**  
**You know there's nothing left to stand in your way**  
**Except Yourself and I know,**  
**Though your heart's full of pain that a hope still remains**  
**Behind those eyes of blue.**

**(Paul Carrack – Eyes Of Blue)**

Cadience, I quickly checked the name of the artist and the name of the song as the Credits rolled up. It was written and sung by Paul Carrack and it was called Eyes of Blue. I went upstairs, showered and drove to Milton Keynes City Centre and walked into HMV. I asked if they had the track and I learnt that it came from Paul Carrack's Album, Blue Views. I asked the assistant to play it for me, so he put the headphones on me and as I listened, I sobbed and cried. People around apparently saw me and asked the assistant what I was listening to, so he played it again, only this time through the massive shop's sound system. They sold so many albums that day!

From those words, I realised that **I** was the only one standing in my way and from that day, I got up and got on with getting on. A week or two later, I couldn't believe it; my friend, Keith, worked at The Stables Theatre in Milton Keynes and Paul Carrack was performing for three nights! Keith arranged for me to meet Paul. What a thrill that was and how kind Paul Carrack was! That night I gave him a letter I had written to him, telling of the impact his words had on my sad heart. He wrote back the most beautiful letter, saying that hearing such things made all his work so worthwhile. We have since met a few more times and he still continues to encourage me.

In the front of Joni-Pip, I have quoted some of Paul's words, only I have substituted 'eyes of green', as my eyes are green (I asked Paul first)! Great question, Cadience!

**Hannah Durnford**

Q: What character from Joni-Pip are you most like?

Oh Dearie me, Hannah, what a question! I am not sure.....I think I am a bit like Joni-Pip, a bit like Poppy and a bit like Ethelred-Ted.....I hope I am a bit like Mother, too but my children might tell you otherwise! Do you think you are like any of the characters then, Hannah?

**Lisa Vance**

Q: What kind of period research did you do before sitting down to write this book?

Brilliant Question, Lisa and until you asked it, I had no idea how much research I had actually done!

So much!

I started by visiting Bath, Nottingham and Edwinstowe. I talked at length to the people in those areas. I spent months pouring over books, newspaper reports, photographs, paintings and sketches in Libraries, Museums and online (although that was very little, compared to the hands-on research, which was so, so enjoyable)!

My most exciting find was when I was talking to a very elderly gentleman in Edwinstowe and he told me that the marriage of Sir Robin of Loxley (Robin Hood), and The Lady Marian (Maid Marian), was recorded in Edwinstowe Church, which Danielle Taute included on her beautiful water colour Map of Edwinstowe and the Surrounding Areas, for The Life in the Wood with Joni-Pip.

### **Edwinstowe and the Surrounding Areas**



I visited The Stopping Cells in Edwinstowe and searched out all their infamous History and checked out all the little shops in The High Street to see which ones were around in 1882, 1892 and 1942.

I looked up the History and visited the location of King John's Palace at Clipstone (close to Edwinstowe), Lisa and I discovered that between 1164-1165, £20 was spent on the Kings' House out of the Manor of Tickhill! Only from the Assession of Edward I, on 20th November 1272, could the Kings houses be truly described as a 'Royal Palace'.

What really thrilled me about this particular research, Lisa, was that I discovered that Edward was married to Eleanor of Castille and she eventually died after being taken ill in 1290, at Rufford Abbey, a place I have passed loads of times, as it is very close to Edwinstowe. I attended Queen Eleanor's School and we learnt so much about her (Castille was the name of one of our Houses....I was House Captain of Lincoln), but I had no idea that she lived in the area where I set Joni-Pip.

I had a private viewing and went down and investigated the dark and dank but fascinating Chislehurst Caves, with their ten miles of tunnels. That was brilliant and a bit scary in places. I learnt how 10,000 people per night would shelter from the Blitz down there, each paying 1 penny for the night, which included the use of a bunk bed and a blanket (more about this in Book Two).



Chislehurst  
Caves



Dover  
Castle



I explored Dover Castle (a truly amazing place), with its many underground caverns and tunnels. I researched its History, dating back as far as the Anglo-Saxons, the Romans, the Normans and then the Napoleonic Wars and lastly WW2. I learnt so much, my notepads kept filling up and up!

I walked miles around the City of Bath, examining buildings, schools and The Workhouse; searching tiny backstreets, lapping up any additional insight into the History of this beautiful place. I also spoke to some of the people of Bath who had survived the two nights of the Bombing Raid and looked up as many newspaper reports, magazine articles and eye-witness accounts as I could find on the damage inflicted. I visited The American Museum in Bath.

I visited Rochester Cathedral and searched and searched and eventually found the Memorial of Colonel Durnford and his valiant men: a small regiment of Royal Engineers, soldiers who were wiped out (apart from two, who then went on to be killed later that day at the famous Rourke's Drift), in the Zulu Wars.

I travelled to Portland, Oregon and looked up some local History and spoke with the people of this magnificent area and discovered that I had distant cousins living there, which was a total coincidence as I had already chosen Portland as the location of Joni-Pip's American roots!

Hmmm, Lisa I bet you wished you hadn't asked!

### **Terry Jackson**

Q: What moved you to write these stories and who was your inspiration to the plot?

Simply, my love for my great niece, Joni-Pip, Terry. I wanted to re-assure her of my love for her, when my first baby granddaughter, Rebekah-Paige was born and Joni was only three. The Plot? I had never understood in books about Time Travel that you could never change the Past. 'Why not?' I would ask, 'You can do anything you like in a book!' So I did!

**Douglas Whitlow**

Q: Since I don't live in the Woods, if a tree falls how do I know if it made any noise?

I think the answer has to be, you don't, Douglas!

**Chuck Aeschbacher, Jr.**

Q: Do you think the Dec 21, 2012 stuff is all fantasy or do you think the world is going to change then? What does the end of time mean to you? Were you inspired by C.S. Lewis? Do you believe in a loving Creator?

I see, Chuck, a multiple question, eh?

I have the privilege of knowing one of the Geologists who first mapped out the Tectonic Plates on the Sea bed in the sixties (he said they did it on a boat with a computer 15 feet long by 12 feet wide). He took great pains to demonstrate to me, in his Paris Apartment, how the movement of these massive plates and the effects of this seismic activity could change the entire topography of Planet Earth.

So, Chuck, all I can say is I am pretty sure things will change one day: as for the day and hour? My thoughts? God only knows.

I do not believe that Time will ever end, Chuck, although I am certain that Mankind will have to face great changes in our future.

I read C.S. Lewis, as an adult (shame on me), and I am quite sure that writers always affect us in some way. I already have deep discussions about the concept of Orbit Interceptions, (which are readily written about in Joni-Pip), with avid Circles Trilogy Fans, who have been affected by **my** writing. As for C.S. Lewis inspiring me? I am not sure, possibly a little.

I hope you read Joni-Pip one day, Chuck, I think you and I would have very lively discussions on it!

I very definitely believe in a loving Creator and I think that would be clearly evident if you read Joni-Pip and see how she marvels at the wonderful things around her.

**Richard VanHook**

Q: Why this title (The Life in the Wood with Joni-Pip)?

It's pretty basic, really, Richard, I started writing it while I was in the wood with Joni-Pip!

I called it 'Life in the Wood with Joni-Pip', at first but after writing about strange sightings in the wood: Two Men in Long Black Coats (incredibly illustrated by James Boddy): The Wall of Time: Stars in the day etc., etc., the title was then changed to 'The' life in the wood.....what sort of life was that? Weird? Wonderful? Fun? Fearful?

Only the Reader would find the answers to those questions! Try it, Rich?



**Linda Bentzen**

Q: Was it difficult to go back to writing after your husband's death?

Yes, it was unbelievably hard, Linda. I thought it was nigh on impossible but then I didn't reckon on so much support and encouragement to get back to getting back to writing!

I married my childhood sweetheart and I was crazy in love with him. I gave up all of my thoughts of a career; I just wanted to breathe the air he breathed: I so loved being his wife and simply adored being the mother of our three beautiful daughters. Want to see them? I have never shown anyone before, publicly!

### **Our beautiful daughters**



This is Zoë, my 2<sup>nd</sup> daughter  
(She is a Tutor at M.K. College  
& is doing a Post Graduate  
Course at Oxford)



This is Hannah, my Baby  
(She is manager of Lush, M.K. & is  
off to The Gambia to work in an  
Orphanage in January 2010)



This is Rebekah, my 1<sup>st</sup> daughter  
(She is a Human Resources  
Consultant for a massive  
Global Company)

### **Didn't we do well?**

We used to go to North Wales every year for our holidays, we loved the mountains, the valleys, the rivers, lakes and waterfalls, as well as the sea and the incredibly beautiful beaches but of all the places we visited, Linda, there was one that struck fear in me (no it wasn't climbing Snowdon: that was exhilarating)! It was called The Aberglaslyn Tunnel.

The tunnel was the site of a disused railway (although it has been re-opened since). When you start at the beginning of the tunnel, it seems an easy journey walking through. Water drips down the sides of the rock and the air becomes decidedly damp almost immediately you step on to the slippery, uneven ground but that's no problem. As you keep walking though (our daughters insisted Daddy never used a torch to light up our way), the light becomes less and less and the dark becomes more and more, until there comes a place, right in the middle of the tunnel where darkness completely takes over and there is total blackness. It is very, very scary. Whichever way you look, backwards or forwards or sideways, you see absolutely nothing, it is totally, totally disorientating. (I cannot imagine anyone ever wanting to walk through that tunnel alone; although I am sure there are many hardy lads and lasses that must have done it)!

Only if you have walked through Aberglaslyn Tunnel, can you explain the experience but believe me, I found it terrifying. You have to keep on walking to find any light again (either way), and a little further on, a tiny, tiny speck of light appears, way, way in front of you. It is indeed, well it was for me, a most welcome sight because you know, if you keep going, eventually that speck of light will grow and get larger and larger until finally you reach the opened mouth of the tunnel and emerge into brilliant sunlight (that's if it is not raining, as it is want to do in North Wales)!

The reason I have gone into great detail for you, Linda, is because Aberglaslyn Tunnel reminded me of how I was after my husband was killed in an accident at work. I felt that I could hardly breathe without him, let alone do any work. I thought that I would never, ever, write another creative word or paint another artistic stroke again. I was truly in the darkest part of that tunnel. Whichever way I turned there was nothing but black. I walked totally in cavernous shadow. I really could not see any light, none whatsoever, at the end of the tunnel.

My husband explained that the reason that we got to a point of total darkness in The Aberglaslyn Tunnel was that there is a bend in the tunnel and so at one point, while exactly on that bend, it is impossible to see either way: once completely around that corner, though, the light appears again, even though it is a long way off.

As I stood in the middle of my emotional tunnel, Linda, I didn't even know what Planet I was on. I could see nothing. If I looked back, all I could see was blackness: the funeral: the flowers on my beautiful husband's coffin: the Inquest (we had to wait an agonising 12 months for that): the Court Case (that took 5 years of waiting): and if I looked forward what was there for me? Just more blackness: the emptiness: the loneliness: the pain: my darling daughters, broken and lost without the most important person in their lives (yes, you know girls and their Daddies)! .....there was definitely no light at the end of my tunnel.....but unlike in The Aberglaslyn Tunnel, there were people around me that carried torches for me, to light the way for me to follow. My incredible family, my dear friends (worth more than rubies), my amazing Doctor, Melanie and my wonderful Therapist, Nadine (who have both become close friends), all of these helped me through by the light they shone for me and although I stumbled now and again, I finally reached the end of that bleak, slippery tunnel. They encouraged me to get back to writing and I am so thankful and appreciative for all their love and support!

So, here I am, Linda, writing once more!

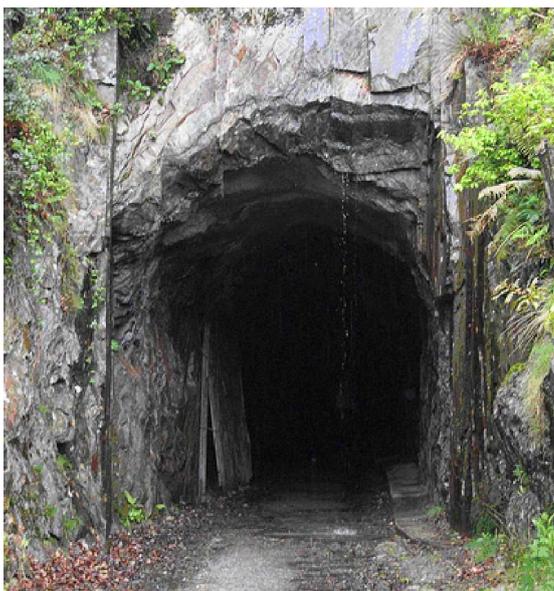
### Aberglaslyn Tunnel



Here is one of the entrances to the tunnel ↑



This is the tunnel after turning the corner (lit up, of course)! ↑



Here is the other end of the tunnel ↑  
You can see water dripping off the rocks



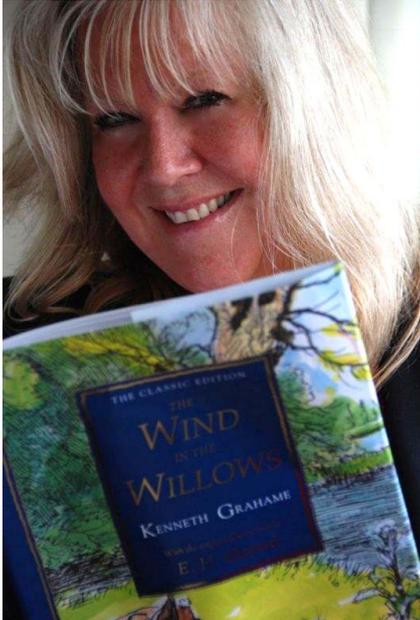
This picture gives you some idea of the blackness around you ↑

\* So if any of you are in the middle of that tunnel, don't despair, as even in the centre of the darkest place, a tiny speck of light can grow into beautiful daylight if you just try to stumble forward and reach it!

**George G Bonck**

Q: Did you write stories when you were a teenager, and what inspired you to pursue this as a career?

Yes, George (wonderful name, by the way), I did and as a little girl, too. I wrote my first play at eight. I loved thinking up stories and getting them down on paper. After my children became independent of me, it seemed a natural progression to pursue something I simply loved doing. Do you like writing stories, George?



**Sandra Fuller**

Q: Hi Carrie, what was your favourite book as a child, and why?

Oh, Sandra, what a lovely question! Without a doubt my favourite book was 'The Wind in the Willows' by Kenneth Grahame (on the back of the text-only cover of Joni-Pip, the photo shows me reading it). I am going to cheat here and post the review I wrote on Goodreads.com.

'This is my favourite children's book of all time. Perhaps it is the very Timelessness of the Tale that makes it so appealing. I love the ambience; reminiscent of gentler times, unencumbered by the material frippery, with which we surround ourselves in this rapid and relentless 21st Century. I never tire of reading the exquisite dialogue; check out the one about the door mat! Just thinking about Ratty and his love affair with the peaceful riverbank, makes me calm and flow! Toad is infuriating with his fads and scams but somehow so lovable and how calmly

Badger takes control; for Toad's own good, of course and sorts him out. This is true love, true friendship: how I wish we could all imitate their tolerance and understanding of their friends' imperfections. About Moley? He is adorable and eager and truly teaches us the meaning of, 'there's no place like home'. I think anyone would be hard put to, to find a flaw in this beautifully written, beautifully illustrated, simple but spectacular story.'

I hope that suffices, Sandra!

**Mrs Bernard Yavitch**

Q: Do you have the ending in mind when you start the book or does it develop as you are writing the story?

Good question, Mrs Bernard Yavitch!

I look upon writing a book in a similar vein as a football match. When the whistle blows the first player kicks the ball and it rarely goes the whole half-a-pitch length and falls straight into the goal, does it? There is much interplay between the players; there are twists and turns and no-one can foretell what is going to happen, although they might hazard a guess. Eventually, unless the result is a boring, scoreless draw, the players do achieve what they are aiming for all throughout the game.....they score a goal! Similarly, when I start a book, I know what I am aiming for, yes, I know how I want it to end but how I get there is not so straight forward, there is interaction between the characters, there are twists and turns along the way, some planned (as in specifically practised moves, among team members), and some are complete surprises to me but eventually I get to the end of the book and reach the goal I had aimed for from the beginning.

So, yes, Mrs Yavitch, I do have the ending in mind when I start the book!

**Deedles**

Q: Besides writing, do you have any other hobbies?

Indeed I do, Deedles!

I love exploring old and Historic places. The U.K. is full of them! I love visiting Castles, especially. I love travelling. I have been to Scotland, Wales and Ireland, of course, all incredibly beautiful

countries! I have stayed in The United States, Canada, Bermuda (yummy), Spain, Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, Ghana, Nigeria and France. I haven't been to Australia or New Zealand yet, although my sister lives in NZ and I was invited to spend six weeks with her in September and October of this year but I had so many Book Signings arranged I simply couldn't go. My oldest daughter, Rebekah, went travelling for a year and said Australia is her favourite country!

I love driving. I have driven across France many times (even on my own)! I live very close to Silverstone (9 miles away), Home of The British Grand Prix: I simply love watching Motor Racing: have you ever been, Deedles? The smell of the burning rubber of the tyres, the incredible decibels reached by the throttle of the highly tuned engines: it's so exhilarating! I love watching cricket and football (Hey, I am English). I love playing netball and tennis. I swim regularly in the river, eight months of the year.

My favourite of all though, is dancing! I am hopeless at Ballroom dancing, even though Britain has gone Ballroom-dancing-mad, recently! However, I can rock with anyone, including some British Jive Champions!

Here are a couple of my Travelling Pics, Deedles!



↑ **This is me in North Wales. My Welsh Colleagues insisted I post this to show that, contrary to popular opinion, it doesn't always rain here!**



↑ **This is me standing close to The Statue of Liberty, looking out over to the New York skyline: post Twin Towers, sadly.**

### **Roger Ellory**

Q: How - as an adult - do you so easily assume the viewpoint of a child and write stories that are so engaging...when you yourself are no longer a child?

Good question, Roger! I am a great believer in the old adage that states,

'Growing old is inevitable but growing up is optional' and I have opted out!

I think anyone who has long said 'goodbye' to the child within them might not enjoy Joni-Pip. It is so simplistically written, although in saying that, I hope it is not predictable! As a child, I read so many amazing books: Treasure Island, Kidnapped, Swiss Family Robinson, Gulliver's Travels, Robinson Crusoe, The Children of the New Forest, Little Women, Tom Sawyer, The Castle of Adventure etc., etc. and I can still immerse myself within the wonders of those exciting pages just thinking about these titles. I can so easily assume the viewpoint of a child, as those incredible writers had the skill and the talent to make everything come alive to me, so much so that the feelings they managed to convey, through their written word, didn't only just enter my head, oh no, they went much further, they went down into my heart and have stayed there; so my heart, me, Carrie King, is indelibly marked with a stamp that says, 'Permanent Child'. I hope I will never stop being a child within, as children look at life in such a simple, straightforward and totally uncomplicated way. Have you grown up then, Roger?

**Ros Lawrence**

Q: Carrie, how long did it take you to write this 1st magnificent book of your trilogy?

Oh, Ros, don't ask me that!

I am so glad you think Book One is magnificent! I started Joni-Pip as a story for my little three-year-old great niece, Joni-Pip, in December 1997. I took ages on the illustrations (sometimes three months a picture), then tragically my husband was killed in a horrific accident and I stopped writing seriously for six years. Once I started again, I had to transform Joni-Pip from a little children's Picture Book into a full blown adventure for all ages! I suppose it took me three years of solid writing.

I hope you enjoy Book Two as much, Ros!

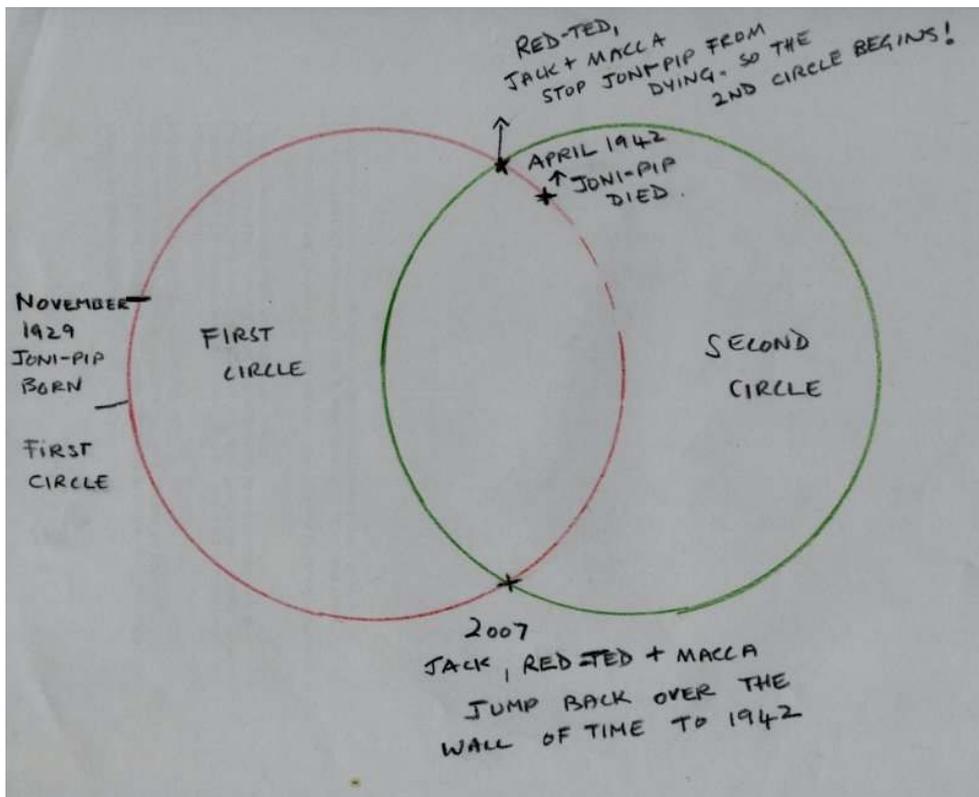
**Phil Downs**

Q: There's often mention of time-lines in fiction, what made you think of time-circles?

Well, Phil, everything in the life I know about, seems to go in circles: i.e. atoms & orbits and The Moon goes round The Earth and The Earth goes round The Sun etc., etc.. I am surprised no-one has used the concept before (they probably have; only I haven't read any yet)! Also, there is something so infinite about a Circle; having no beginning and no end, it just fascinates me.

As well as that because of the difficulties of going back in time, changing the Past and then returning to a different Future, I created new Circles each time, so there are many Circles in a person's life, not just one....all fantasy but great fun!

This is a diagram I drew for an avid Circleite who wanted me to explain the 'Theory of the Circles' as if.....



Brilliant question, Phil

**The Willmott Family**

I'd like to be a book character so I can have adventures like Joni-Pip. Do you think Joni-Pip could one day have a friend called Rachel with a dog called Dolly?

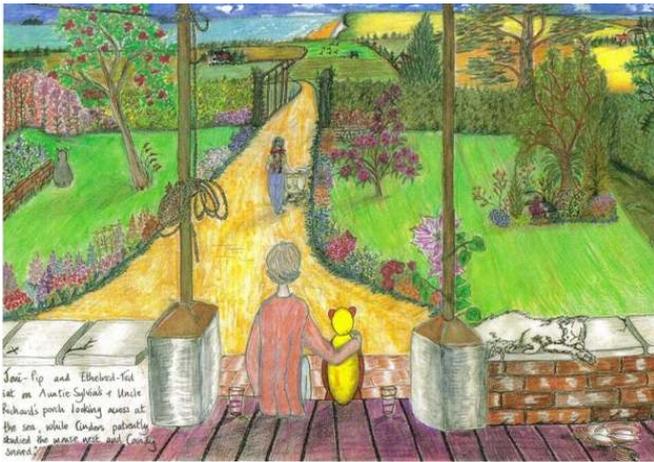
I am quite sure, Willmott Family! Wait and see!

**Sylvia Ellis**

Q: Where is your favourite place for writing your books and why is this place so special?

My favourite place to write is on the decking of my mobile home, by the River Ouse in Felmersham, near Bedford, Sylvia. It is so peaceful and serene and I truly know that I am so blessed to have such a beautiful Sanctuary to escape to! Not only is it a quiet haven of tranquillity in the day but it is also the place to be at night. Being away from City pollution, we see amazing night skies there of the most incredible colours and so many Shooting Stars!

My sister's house near Windsor is also a place where I have drawn one of my illustrations. It is beautiful there; you can see it in the Picture Book. It is the one below of Joni-Pip and Ethelred-Ted sitting on the porch, looking out over the fields towards the sea. I used a bit of artistic license here; so for anyone who knows their English Geography.....



↑ Here is my illustration, drawn while I was sitting on my sister's porch. I added the path and flowers! In Book 2 The house is called 'Two Beach View' or TBV for short!

↑ Here is the side of my sister's house and the porch Joni-Pip and Ethelred-Ted were sitting on

**Alexander Hopkins**

Q: What was your main inspiration, or what things inspired the storyline of 'The Life in the Wood?'

When I was eight, Alexander, my best friend died of peritonitis. I wanted to 'put time back' so she could go to the Doctors and have her appendix out and not die. I have done exactly that in Joni-Pip!

**Wendy Mahaney**

Q: Who is your favourite character in the book? Which character was the hardest to write?

Oh Dear, Wendy, another impossible question to answer! My characters are like my children and they are so real to me, it would be impossible to choose a favourite, although I have a sneaky love of Macca: who wouldn't be a little bit in love with him; a romantic Italian Opera Singer?

Which was the hardest character to write? I think probably Nuttingham Squirrel. I am not good at 'nasty', I like love and kindness and impeccable manners, so to write about an officious, bad tempered, ill-mannered rodent was not easy, Wendy, not easy at all! I think Illustrator, Paul Moon really captured his rough demeanour in this pencil drawing, though, don't you? I told my Editor it was his feet that did it for me, they look so grumpy!



## Nia Budding

Q: You obviously write because you love it, but what was the inspiration to write Joni Pip?

Nia, it was my total, unconditional love for my great niece, Joni Philipa. It all started when Joni was three. I simply adored her, as she is the daughter of Philip, my much beloved nephew: I call him my 'only son', as I only have daughters! We were staying at Center Parcs, in Sherwood Forest and Joni-Pip was sitting on my knee and we were looking out of the patio window, enjoying the beautiful trees that surrounded us and watching the birds, rabbits and squirrels munching away at the nuts and seeds that had been put out for them. However, Joni kept looking anxiously at the Moses Basket in the corner of the room, where 6-week-old, Becky-Paige, my first granddaughter, was laying, peacefully sleeping. I pulled Joni in really close to me and told her that I was going to write a book especially for her, so that she knew that however many grandbabies I had, she would always be special to me! Becky-Paige is Joni-Pip's little sister in *The Life in the Wood with Joni-Pip*.



**Joni-Pip & Becky-Paige in Sherwood Forest, ↑  
where it all began. Joni-Pip was six and  
Becky-Paige was three in this picture.**



**Here they are in November 2009 at The Joni-Pip ↑  
Workshop, Grendon Underwood School, where  
they both signed as many books as I did.  
Joni-Pip is now 15 and Becky-Paige is 12.**

## Rhiannon Campbell

Q: Ethelred-Ted is by far my favourite character, his personality is so realistic. How did you come up with the character of Ethelred-Ted?

He is an amalgamation of my brothers, my friends, one particular one in South Wales and a couple of characters I have chanced upon briefly, during my life. So glad you like him, Rhiannon! Is he anything like you? Or someone you know, then?

Have you ever read these lovely words by Grace Brown? She truly sums up Ethelred-Ted:-

### **Ethelred-Ted**

Having read *The Life in the Wood with Joni-Pip* so many times, I think I would be hard pushed to get to know the story and its vibrant, cheerful characters any better than I have already done. I have spent more time in Windy Woods and curled up in Grandfather's Cottage than I've spent in any other of my (numerous) dream-worlds and have got to know the characters better than I know most people. I love them all for different reasons, each and every one, whether it be the adorable Poppy Pigeon or the Mysterious Men in Long Black Coats.

Most of all, however, I have known and loved Ethelred-Ted, the mischievous Red and Yellow Bear, for everything he stands for. He is pompous but lovable, precocious yet kind, and his love of food and those around him are enough to brighten the darkest day and the greyest spirit. (I believe that was once said of Philip Pullman's imagination, but I'm nicking it.)

Eth is a caring companion, a knowledgeable teacher, a swashbuckling pirate. He is a protector, a clown, a maker of Great Plans and above all that, he is a Friend. A Friend whose puns and philosophies are so unique they can be read again and again and never tired of.

We know a little of the background of this lovable character; he is a German-made teddy-bear purchased by Philip Garador during part of his Post Graduate Course. He is also none other than a Steiff.

Some may say that children today are 'growing out' of teddy bears but I do not believe this to be the case. A bear is a companion, something to hold and love, to give 'Huggerlies' and, most importantly, to talk to. Because who knows? One day, if your heart is right, you may hear him answer you....

Grace Brown aged 13

Paul Moon's great drawing of Ethelred-Ted



### **Skena Megahed**

Q: I'm Egyptian so what would you do for making your books more readable/known internationally and not only for the English readers?

Hmmm, Skena, I think I have to leave that one to my Publishers. I would so love Joni-Pip to be translated into your language. This is a new thought for me and it would be truly wonderful to see my work in another language.....in fact all languages! Great thought, indeed, thank you, Skena!

### **Sylvie McWilliams**

Q: What are your feelings on translating books to different languages? Do you think anything is lost or could it enhance the book?

I have had a few comments from some French readers of Joni-Pip, Sylvie. They have read it in English, of course. They have said they found some of the words a tad difficult to grasp and I think another difficulty might just be humour but I am sure that could be worked out! They said they loved the book, anyway and have asked when the French Translation is going to be ready!

### **André Doualla**

Q: As we know, the first book was written for your niece Joni-Philipa and inspired by her life and history. With the second book, do you continue to be inspired by her or by other people? Are you also inspired by the events of life?

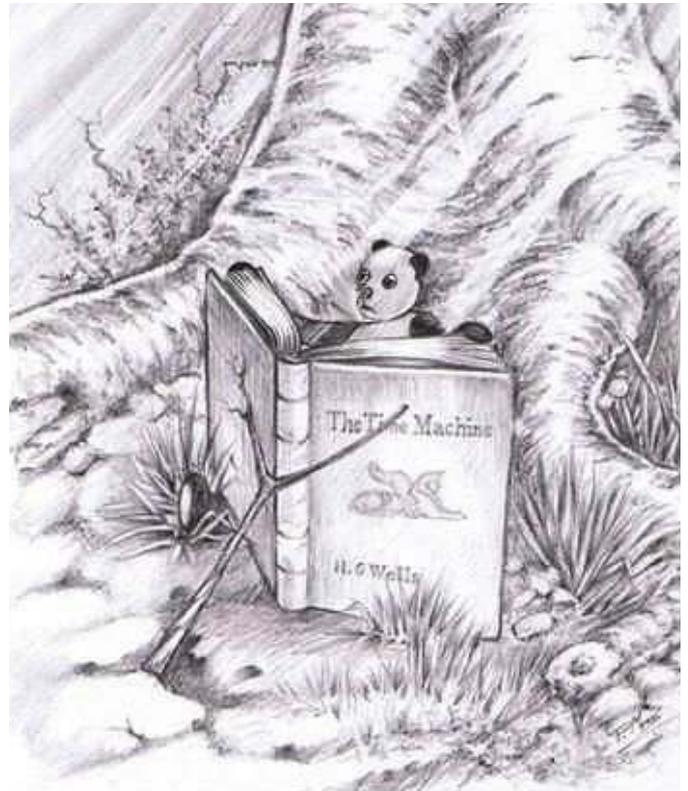
Thank you so much for writing, Andre! All three books of the Trilogy are for Joni-Pip. She has worked so hard running the Circleites (Fans of The Circles Trilogy), and constantly works on new things for them and she has read Joni-Pip at least thirteen times and still loves it....what dedication is that? Also, I simply adore her, as all loving aunties do!

I am always inspired by the events of life!

### **Joni**

Q: My name is Joni also! Where is your most favorite place to write?

In my Mobile Home, Joni, by the River Ouse in Bedfordshire, England! I sit outside on the decking surrounded by beautiful flowers, watching all the wildlife getting on with their various chores and listening to the sounds of the river. Yummy! Joni-Pip comes over most weekends I am there and in the summer she stays for most of her school holidays. We spend hours writing together and talking about Plots and characters. Joni has read some of Book Two and she really loves Jem and says she wants to play her when Joni-Pip is made into a Film! Right now she is working on an audio play of The Circles Trilogy Book One, The Life in the Wood with Joni-Pip. We all swim in the River together. Joni and her Dad jump off the bridge and they say I can join their 'Bridge Club' once I jump off the bridge next year. We will have to wait and see! By the way, I love your name!



Here is a wren, the smallest British bird, and her babies, taken by my nephew a couple of yards from my Mobile Home in Joni-Pip's garden (yes, she and her parents have a mobile home there, too)!



This picture gives you some idea of the ↑ amazing light and colour of the skies we get in Felmersham in the evenings.

I have this picture as my wall paper on my laptop. This just shows how peaceful and bucolic it is in Felmersham, where I work on the Joni-Pip Books. It is so inspiring and so easy to write here!



I simply love this wonderful Study of Joni-Pip. Her Dad took it while she was working on the Audio Play of The Life in the Wood with Joni-Pip. It reminds me of one of those Old Fashioned Miniatures.

**Marie Abendroth**

**Q: What is your inspiration for this book? Why did you choose this theme in particular?**

I started writing *The Life in the Wood with Joni-Pip* while I was with my great niece, Joni-Pip and we were staying in the woods: Sherwood Forest, in actual fact, Marie. It seems amazing that Robin Hood and his Band of Merry Men once walked about in this area! There is a magic in the woods, it's so peaceful and with all that oxygen given off by the trees, it's so invigorating, too!

I wrote the book especially for Joni-Pip.



**This is the view from the other side of the trees**

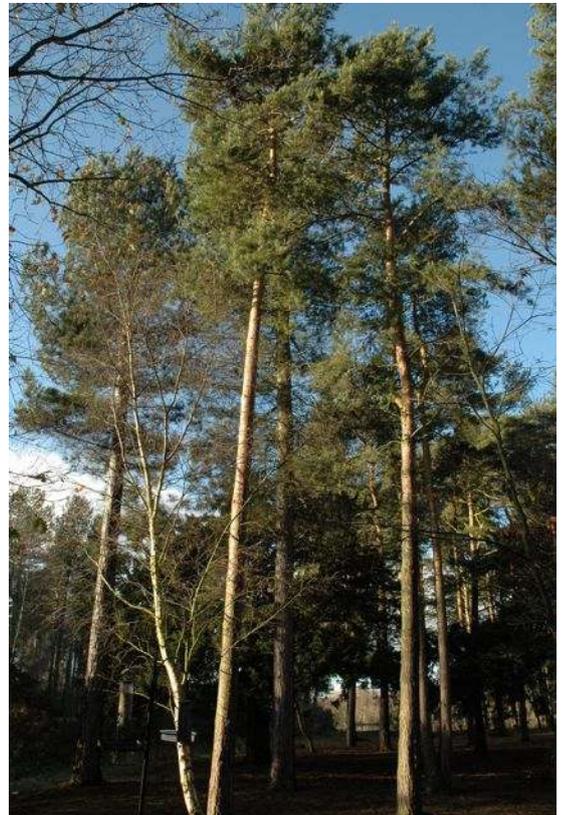
**I wrote some of *Joni-Pip* in this villa**



**This is the view from the back of the villa**

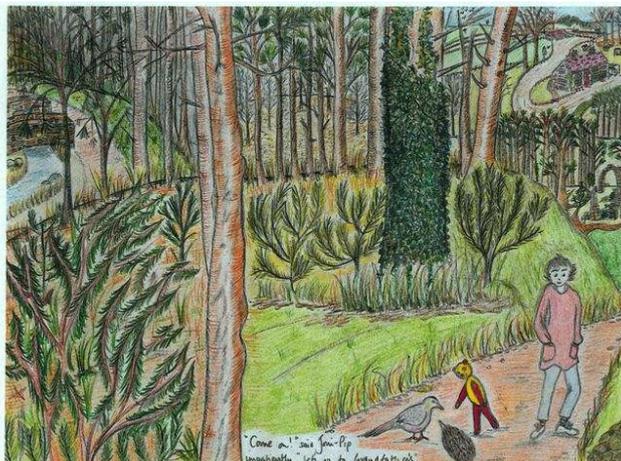


**This is the view from the side of the villa ↓**



With views like these, Marie, is it any wonder I had to write? I used to take my laptop and sit outside on tree stumps in amongst the trees. It made me feel a part of the woods and I found it so easy to work here!

I also drew a few of my Illustrations here. The front cover of the Picture Book is a direct view from one of the windows of the villa we stayed in. Everything was so beautiful, Marie!



← **The front cover of the *Joni-Pip* Picture Book**

**Kenny Sime**

Q: Hi Carrie, I was wondering which author has influenced you the most? Is there one that stands out from the crowd or are there a few that have inspired you?

Even though my favourite modern authors are the three Johns: John Le Carre, John Grisham and John Wyndham.....without hesitation, Kenny, I have to say, that Best Selling Author, R.J.Ellory has had the most profound effect on me as a writer. He definitely stands out from the crowd.



We met at a Library Exhibition at the N.E.C. in Birmingham and immediately, we clicked. He said it is something he usually finds with writers; they instantly have this common bond.

It is not just that I believe he has to be one of The All Time Greats (his work simply staggers me), but it is his genuine interest in all his family, friends and fans. I was privileged to spend a whole literary day with him and he always took time with everyone who wanted to speak to him. He listened intently to what they were saying, never butted in and always showed deep respect for what they said and who they were.

**R.J.Ellory** author of: Candlemoth  
Ghostheart  
A Quiet Vendetta  
City Of Lies  
A Quiet Belief In Angels  
A Simple Act Of Violence  
The Anniversary Man

(As well as over 20 other unpublished books)!

I have gone, bleating to him when I have been disappointed, in either people or myself and he has immediately lifted me up like a shepherd, with words of relief, consolation and encouragement. He always replies when people write to him. He has taught me so much about the ups and downs of being a writer. I cannot praise him enough!

Great question, Kenny!

**Catherine Burnett**

Q: What saddens you most about the way, as a human race, we treat each other and how does this reflect in your book?

Catherine, although Joni-Pip is set with World War Two as a backdrop, in no way do I take sides or glorify the horrors of war. I have written for children, hoping that adults will also read Joni-Pip and reflect on the way we treat each other. To succeed in life, I think to love and respect others is essential! If we all did that, how different Life on this Beautiful Planet would be!

**Staci A**

Q: Where do you draw your inspiration to write from?

Life and more life, Staci; people are amazingly interesting. I just look, listen, observe and write!

**Charles Volstad**

Q: How do you start a new book?

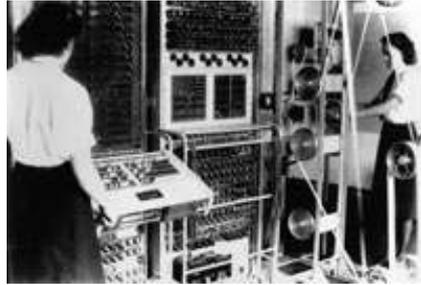
With lots and lots of research, Charles: probably months and months.

I have recently been a guest at Bletchley Park (Home of The Code Breakers), which was so exciting, exploring the cellars and all the huts and examining the Enigma Machine, The Bombe

and Colossus. Simon Greenish, their Managing Director, has now asked me to include Bletchley Park in Book Two, so that has taken quite a lot of extra research and re-thinking!



[www.bletchleypark.co.uk](http://www.bletchleypark.co.uk)



Women of Bletchley working on the World's 1<sup>st</sup> Computer, during WWII

This is a real German Enigma Machine.

>



The secret lies within Bletchley Park: how the British broke one of the greatest secrets of World War II: the brilliant German Enigma code.

Before I start on the story, I have to collate all my notes and try and put them into some semblance of order and then, finally, I begin to write! Loads of stuff for Book Two, as you can see, Charles!

#### Winning Readings

Q: Looks like a fun book - I love that it was written for someone specific! Do you have future adventures planned? Do you think it would take another 10 years to do it again?

What a great question! Yes, I am at the moment writing Book Two and no, I don't think it will take another ten years to complete and yes, I already have mapped out the Plot for Book Three of The Circles Trilogy.

#### Jane Haines

Graphic style books with drawing and text are really popular - have you thought of doing a version of Joni Pip like this?

No, but it is definitely something to think about and consider, Jane.

#### Stephanie N

What was it like growing up in a family of 8 children? There must be a lot of inspiration there for your stories. Do you get any ideas from your childhood?

It was wonderful, totally wonderful, Stephanie! I was brought up in a time when children could leave the house in the morning and play all day up on the hills or in the woods or swimming in the Spring and we wouldn't return until evening and our parents never worried. Not like today, sadly. We played so much up on The Clappers, a hill covered in trees, which features heavily in Joni-Pip. I was born just below them. I wish all children could enjoy such freedom. I have incorporated lots of warm family moments in Joni-Pip.

#### Kermit Crissey

What inspired you to write books?

I have always loved English, Kermit and I read and read. I often think a love of reading inspires anyone to want to write a book, themselves. As a child I wrote pages and pages of stories and my first play at eight (I forced my brother and sister to act in it, in front of my parent's House Guests.....how boring is that)? I loved reading and wrote everywhere; even on my bedroom walls (do not try this at home)! Do you write then, Kermit, if so, what inspires you to write?

#### Lance Pearson

What gives you inspiration?

Beautiful scenery, incredible music and a hearty laugh, Lance; have you got one?

## Char

You seem to have almost created your own language for the characters, full of acronyms and whimsical alliteration. What was your source and purpose?

Yes, Char, I love to do that. When some Circleites were on BBC Radio 4, the Presenter Natalie Barrass (seen below), who had read *Joni-Pip*, loved that, too. She even got the Circleites to speak some 'Life Language', as they call it. I love words and simply adore making up new ones, like 'Quission' and 'drurdles'.....I couldn't think of the name given to the sound that ducks make when they siphon the bits from the top of water and I thought 'drurdle' described it perfectly!



## Erma Hurtt

How did you start writing books?

I have always written stories and then I wrote *Joni-Pip* for my great niece as I loved her so, Erma, have you started writing them, yet?

## Patti Bright

Did the books you read as a child inspire your writing style? Any in particular?

Yes, I am pretty sure, Patti. **The Wind in the Willows** is still my favourite book (for any of you who buy the 540-page paperback I think you can see me reading a copy of it on the back cover). I love the dialogue, the whole story is very bucolic and I have tried to achieve that feeling in *Joni-Pip*, too.



**Here are *Joni-Pip* and *Becky-Paige* with some other Circleites being interviewed by BBC Radio 4. For all Readers of *Joni-Pip*, just behind them, to the right are The Clappers. Natalie Barrass, the Presenter is holding open her own copy of *The Life in the Wood with Joni-Pip*.**

## Doreen Riopel

Once the book is on the shelves, do you ever want to just take it back and change things?

Yes, Doreen, I don't think any writer is truly satisfied with their work. Sometimes when I am asked to sign a copy of *Joni-Pip*, I point out any typos I am aware of. I would like to cross them out and correct them and initial them, of course but I refrain!

## Syed Ahsun Zafar

*Joni-pip* is an interesting name. How did you come up with it?

I didn't, Syed. It's the name of my great niece, *Joni Philipa*, her aunty first called her *Joni-Pip* and it has remained very firmly in the family. She signs her name, 'Joni-Pip', on book signings! Here I am, Syed, holding her. I think my face tells you how much joy she gave me, when she came into my life. *Joni-Pip* hates this picture; she says she is wearing a carpet! I told her that all Baby Girls were wearing dresses like that at the time and they were so, 'That Year'. *Joni-Pip* tells me that she was thinking, 'Give me that camera.....now!'



## LeAndrew Taylor

What writers inspired you to become a novelist?

Kenneth Grahame, John Le Carre, Mark Twain and William Shakespeare, LeAndrew.

**Darcie Kayes**

Are any of the characters based on people in your life?

Absolutely, Darcie (simply love the name)! Archimedes Spindlethrop is based on both of my extremely brainy brothers. Poppy is based on two or three of my children's friends and one of my sisters; Hetty is based on one of my daughters; Ethelred-Ted is based on one of my daughters and various friends; Jemimah is based on Joni (much more of her in Book Two), and one of my daughters and Nuttingham Squirrel is based on all the grumpy people I know!

**Paige Waites**

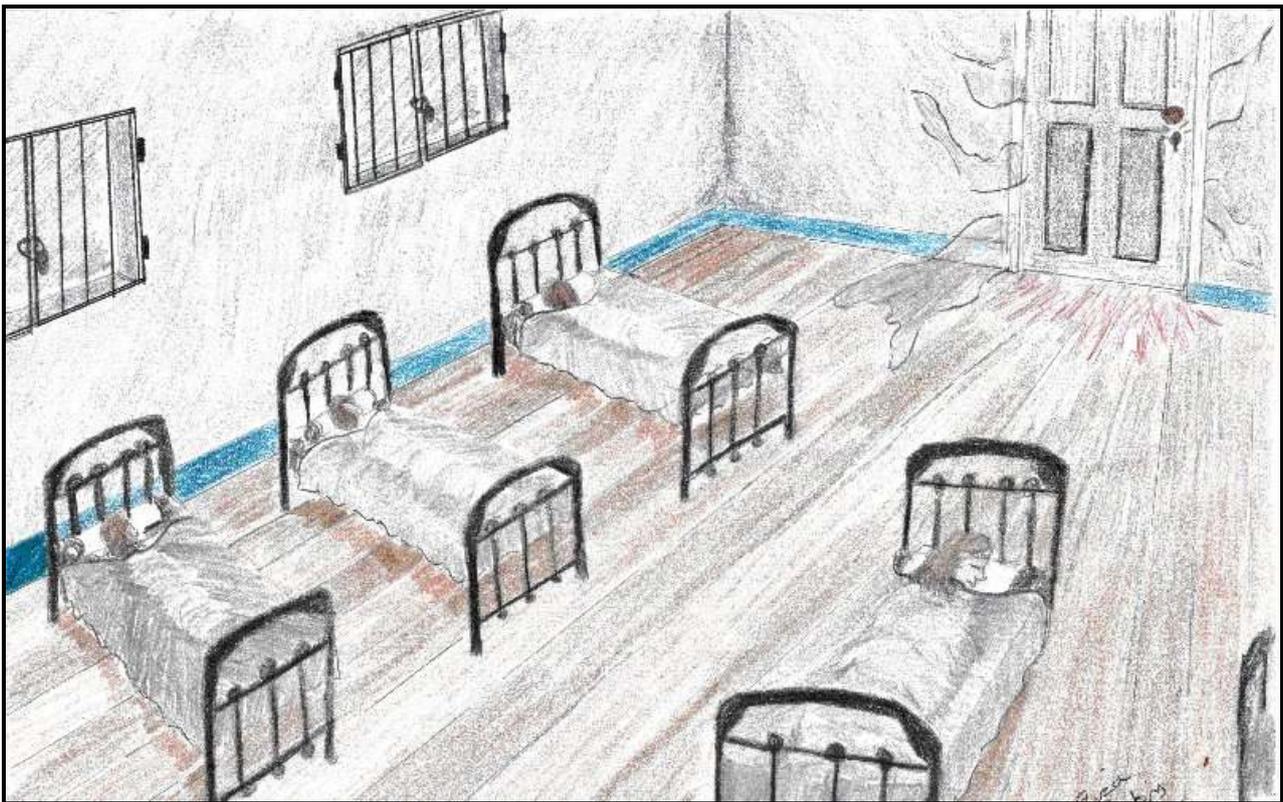
Have you ever written any other books and if so, what are they called?

I have only ever written **The Life in the Wood with Joni-Pip Picture Book** and the full length novel, **The Life in the Wood with Joni-Pip** (Book One of the Circles Trilogy). I have other ideas for something totally different, Paige but they are way ahead of my present schedule!

**Eliza Hopkins**

Which is your favourite picture in the book Life in the Wood with Joni-Pip and why?

The Workhouse Fire because I described it briefly to the artist, who was a child and she got it exactly as I imagined it, Eliza. Look at those floorboards! How sparse is this Children's Dormitory! I love how she has drawn the smoke seeping in through the door frame and the flames are glowing from under the door. The windows are locked and barred: it truly captures the ambience!



**The Workhouse Fire**

**Lily Kwan**

What is your favorite food?

What a sumptuous question, Lily! If you read Joni-Pip you will notice I spend quite a lot of time describing what they all eat: especially Ethelred-Ted, he is a complete foodaholic!

What is my favourite food, eh? Oh, how can I choose? I absolutely adore Jacket potato with cheese and coleslaw and I also love fresh fruit with Greek Yoghurt, especially raspberries. I simply can't get enough of Caesar Salad (I first tried that in Bermuda and was hooked immediately), and I so enjoy grilled Scottish Salmon with lemon juice and heaps of black pepper!

**Janelle**

Q: What are a few read-a-like books or series for those that enjoy your Joni-Pip books and would like to read similar stories?

Well, Janelle, that is a very difficult question to answer!

I have been called 'The New Enid Blyton with attitude' on BBC Radio, so I suppose the books a bit like Joni-Pip (although very different), are written by this famous English author, Enid Blyton. I love reading her adventure stories.

**Enid Blyton's Adventure Collection**

For anyone who has been hooked on the Famous Five but is now ready for a new set of adventures, these totally gripping tales are essential reading! Meet Jack, Dinah, Philip and Lucy-Ann - four ordinary children who just happen to stumble upon some truly extraordinary adventures. In one story, the children find themselves in a lonely valley, where there's treasure to be found but what danger does the valley conceal, and who are the two strange pilots watching them from above? In another exciting tale, when strange lights are seen flashing from a dark castle the children are drawn into a sinister plot concealed within its gloomy underground passages... You won't be able to put these stories down, we guarantee it!

The Valley of adventure	The Island of adventure	The Castle of adventure	The Sea of adventure
The Mountain of adventure	The Circus of adventure	The River of adventure	The Ship of adventure

**Rebekah**

Q: Just supposing you could JIT (jump in time), like Joni-Pip and you had changed all the bad things into good things, is there any where you would like to visit in the Universe?

Great question, Rebekah! I think I would simply love to fly around the Universe in an Orbit (see Joni-Pip), enthralling at all the spectacular sights out there in Space!

**Sarah North**

Q: I want to become a writer, what suggestions can you make?

Read and read and write and write, Sarah and you will be amazed at what you come up with! Join a Writer's Group; they are really helpful and inspiring. Browse the Internet and find, self-help sites for established and budding writers: [www.goodreads.com](http://www.goodreads.com) is one I belong to.

**Liam**

Q: On the back of Joni-Pip it says you write in Cornwall I love it there, which part?

Liam, what a lovely question! I write in a little place just outside St Austell. I adore it there, too, in fact as well as Felmersham and Windsor; it is definitely one of my favourite places to write!



**Here is my brother's and his wife's beautiful cottage where I write, set in lovely Gardens**



**Here is the beach, where I swim, only a short distance away!**

**Ed Nemmers**

What is a catalyst for you to write when you are stymied?

A good swim in the river, Ed!

**Gianna**

What made you first get interested in writing?

Reading! Reading! Reading! Everything I could get my hands on, Gianna: books, magazines, newspapers. I used to spend all the time at the breakfast table, reading labels on sauce bottles and every word on cereal boxes.

Reading generates writing, Gianna!

**Chrysa**

What authors have influenced YOU the most?

Kenneth Grahame, Dan Brown and John Le Carre but most of all, R.J. Ellory, Chrysa.

**Tim Hughes**

Do you feel the critics in the United States are harsher than those in Great Britain or is it the other way around, and does it ever really matter to you as an author?

Great question, Tim and for what it is worth, my view is this: most writers pay no heed whatsoever to critics who haven't written a book themselves. It is so easy to wipe out, sometimes years of work, with a few cutting and unnecessarily unkind words. The only critiques that genuinely mean anything to most writers are from writers, themselves because they will always have something upbuilding to say, even if it is simply, 'well done for the sheer hard work!' Tim, may I just quote some words to me about Joni-Pip, from Best Selling Author, R.J.Ellory?

**'It is a great accomplishment, and I know that getting the book done in the first place is testament to your ability as a writer, but also - understanding at least some small part of the trials and tribulations you have to go through as a creative writer - I appreciate the sheer guts and persistence necessary to complete a work of this scope.'**

I belong to an Internet Book Group and I am staggered that so many Americans slate The Works of William Shakespeare! To mercilessly attack the works of the most celebrated English Poet and Playwright, The Bard, himself, seems ludicrous to me and it makes me genuinely wonder if his amazing use of the English language and cunningly clever puns, simply go straight over their heads! I to logged on to YOUTUBE, yesterday to listen to Radiohead singing the song 'Creep', which I absolutely love. I was interested to read some comments posted under-neath the video. They were discussing why Americans don't seem to like this incredible track. The general census of opinion was that it is a cultural issue and Americans simple don't understand this very British music. So, I suppose, Tim that has to apply in all things. Americans or Brits: I have no idea who are the harshest. As you guessed, writers are far too much in love with writing to let it matter!

I was talking to a Librarian at a Book Signing, this week and she said at her Library, they never pay any attention to reviews in newspapers and magazines or online; they simply order the books and let the Readers make up their own minds! Pretty sound advice, if you ask me! I suppose so many have written in to joni-pip.com saying how much they love Joni-Pip, so, Tim, we know it is loved by at least a couple of people!!!

Literature, Music, Art....it is all a matter of personal taste, isn't it, Tim? I think a harsh critic is in want of heart, personally, unless he has gone through the mangling experience of completing an entire book, himself but then he wouldn't be harsh, he would hail the completion of the task, way, way above his personal taste in reading!



Here is where I swim, even at night, just yards from my mobile home. Nice, Ed, huh and truly inspiring?

**Maja Meza**

Were you afraid that your book might not be well received?

Maja, I sometimes wonder if writers are a separate breed from others, as that fear never even occurred to me. I give talks all the time to Reader's Groups and Writer's Groups and Book Groups. I spend days in Schools, Book Shops, Libraries and at Joni-Pip Events all over the country and although I speak before all different types of audiences and all ages, of course, I always say the same thing about writing and that is this:

'Your writing is as individual to you as your fingerprints; it comes from **your** mind and **your** heart, so it is entirely **yours** and it belongs to nobody else but **you**.

I don't believe in good or bad writing. I simply believe in different writing. Yours is different from mine and mine is different from yours.

With that in mind, nobody should expect everyone to enjoy their work, in the same measure. I don't write because I expect everyone to relish my work. I write because I need to bring out of my heart and mind, the things within that delight and enthral me and in doing so, it gives me great pleasure and fulfilment. If others do enjoy the fruits of your labour that is absolutely wonderful and absolutely thrilling but it isn't absolutely essential to give you the satisfaction and elation needed to go on and write more! You provide that for yourselves!'

I heard a famous quote, recently (sorry I have forgotten the author of it), which said,

'If you don't enjoy what you write then don't expect anyone else to enjoy reading it!'

I think even more thrilling than seeing Copies of Joni-Pip and a massive poster with my name on it, in Waterstone's Book Shop front window, in Truro, Cornwall, was actually writing the words 'THE END' on my completed manuscript; long before it was edited, long before it was proof read and long before it was bound into a book and published! No bad review or cutting remarks on my work could ever take that away from me! I had written it and it was my hard graft and my triumph!

I suppose, Maja, I was surrounded by positivity as a little girl (I was, as Joni-Pip is, totally spoilt), and my lovely mother always brought us up to be encouraging and positive, as an optimistic attitude always focuses on good things rather than bad and produces beneficial results and boosts confidence in others. It kind of reminds me of Pollyanna: always trying to see something good, in any situation.

My sister is a Teacher in New Zealand, Maja and she told me that once, she inherited, in her class, a boy who was labelled, 'unteachable'. He obviously came from a disadvantaged background as he never wore socks and looked as if he never washed. My sister asked him (alongside the rest of the class), to write her a story. He replied that he couldn't, he didn't know how to write. My sister said, 'Rory just write me a story!' At the end of the lesson, he didn't want to hand in his efforts. Diana, my sister simply again asked him gently, to hand over his work. He walked back to his desk and picked up, from the floor, a piece of crumpled, screwed up, grubby paper and walked back to my sister and gave it to her in a ball. Carefully, Diana unfurled the work and pressed it as flat as she could on her desk, smoothing it out with her hands. Rory was standing in front of her with his head down and both his arms behind his back. On the paper was some illegible writing, scrawled all over the page but underneath, right at the bottom, he had written in very legible letters, 'Rory'.

My sister gasped and said to him, 'Rory, how beautifully you have written your name! I am going to give you 10 out of 10, just for that lovely piece of writing!' Diana said his head immediately came up and he beamed from ear to ear and turned and smiled at the rest of the class!

You know the rest, Maja! Rory went from strength to strength, from that very day and eventually achieved great success in his Final Exams.

Something good can always be found in any book, so I am saddened that some Critics are so blind that they cannot find a single thing to be positive about in a writer's work and they think

they are so clever because they can't! The clever ones are they that can find a gem, even amidst a book they don't particularly favour.

So, Maja, was I afraid that my book might not be well received? No, I never ever thought about it! Brilliant question!

**R. Hicks**

Q: How did your niece inspire you to write a book?

I wanted her to know that however many little grandchildren I had, R.Hicks, I would always love her, so I told her I would write a book especially for her and I did! Here she is, a few yards from my Mobile Home in Felmersham, where I write eight months of the year. She and my three granddaughters are the best of friends and they are jumping for joy with Elliott, an avid Circleite!

(I simply love this Picture; I think it should be made into a Poster)!



Beth

Elle

Elliott

Becky-Paige

Joni-Pip

**Jesse Warden**

Q: What made you decide to do a children's version along with your adult version of your book?

I started it for my great niece, Joni-Pip, when she was three, Jesse. Sadly, my husband was killed long before I finished it. I stopped writing for quite a few years. When I resumed writing, Joni-Pip was getting on for thirteen but she wanted me to keep in all the original characters from the very first little story. I completed the Children's Picture Book and then went on to write a full length Children's Adventure Story, fitting for an older child as Joni-Pip had then become (she is now 15).

**Melanie**

Q: What made you start the story under such depressing circumstances, like the Bombing of Bath?

Melanie, one of my dearest friends is a refined, gracious lady, who was a child in Bath in April 1942. She, it was, who first introduced me to that incredibly beautiful City. She took me to the place she used to live, as a little girl, in a stately, four-storey, terraced, biscuit-coloured house, standing in a semi-circular Mews. She told me how she and her parents had run through the

streets of Bath to her Grandfather's house, terrified, when the sirens started wailing throughout the City. They ran there as her Grandfather had a cellar, in which they could seek refuge. She told me how a plane came in, very low and the bullets peppered the ground in front of her. She said it was so close that she actually saw the face of the pilot. She then described her night in the cellar, how it was mixed with fear and exhilaration. She didn't fully comprehend it but it changed her life and the way she lived from then on.

Joni-Pip is a spoilt selfish girl, who needs to learn that there is more to life, much more than attending a good school, living in large, impressive house and having the privileges of life (even during a World War). I wanted to convey her selfishness, as even though the people of Bath lost lives and homes, all she could think about was satisfying her own self-centred longings and yearnings. As most writers do, I drew on my friend's true life experience.

Possibly another thing might just be a cultural issue. I have no idea which part of the world you live in, Melanie but in England, bombing was something that this country had to endure, night after night during the Second World War. Destruction of people and property was, sadly, a commonplace occurrence for the citizens of this Island and many people living here still remember those days. There are many western lands where, I am pleased to say, this is something completely foreign, unknown and unheard of, whereas in England it is an unforgettable part of our heritage, an indelible part of our history that we cannot erase.

Joni-Pip isn't about war; it is a story with the war going on as a backdrop, behind the action.

So, I hope, Melanie, if you ever read it, that Joni-Pip will make you laugh, as I have endeavoured to write a story of laughter, History, excitement, humour and intrigue!

Good question, though!



**These are pictures of Bath, taken after the raid in April 1942**



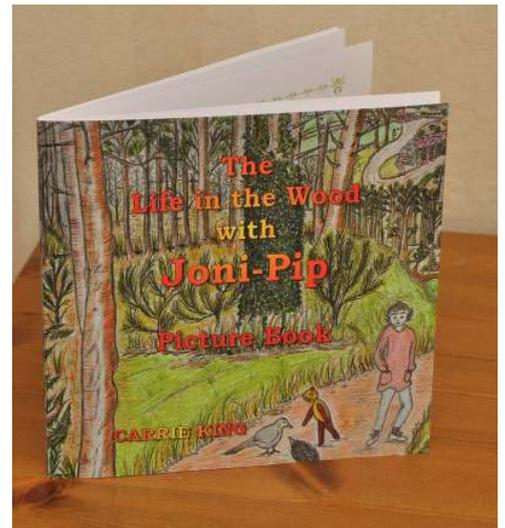
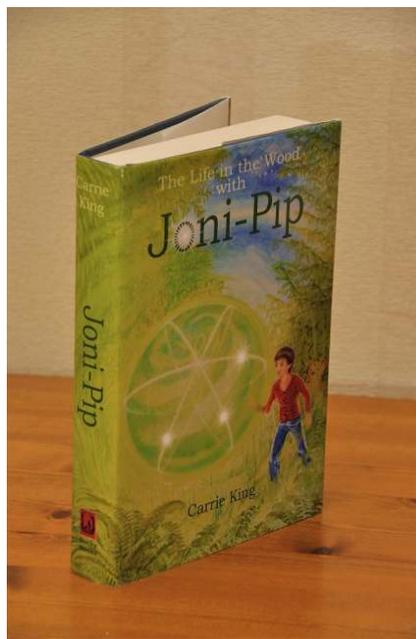
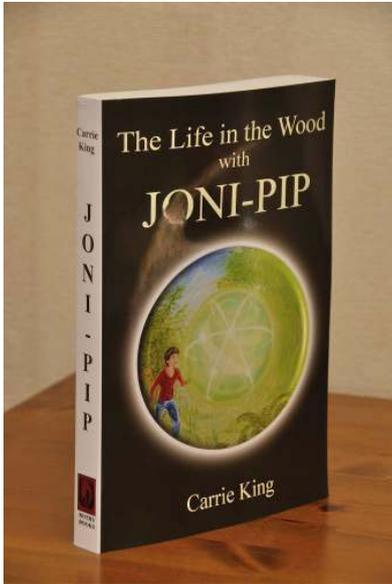
**The Beautiful City of Bath today: is it any wonder I chose it for Joni-Pip's birthplace?**

**This is my favourite part of the City of Bath. There are little shops built all Along the sides of the bridge!**



**This is exactly the type of house Joni-Pip lived in: four storeys, with painted black railings and white doors, with brass Letter boxes, standing in a curved Mews!**

→



**So, every one of you, I just want to thank you all so much for taking the time to go online and post a Question on Perpetual Prose for me! All of the questions have been interesting and I have shown you pictures and told you things I have never ever disclosed publicly before, so I hope that means something to you.....it certainly does to me!**

**Grateful thanks too, to Perpetual Prose, for all that has been done for me!**

**If you do read Joni-Pip and want to become a Circleite, please visit Joni's blog at [www.circleites.blogspot.com](http://www.circleites.blogspot.com) and if you want to follow me on Twitter I am *CarrieKing1* and if you want to follow my blog (which I have only just begun), it is: [www.carriekingsblog.blogspot.com](http://www.carriekingsblog.blogspot.com)**

**Very much love to you all,**



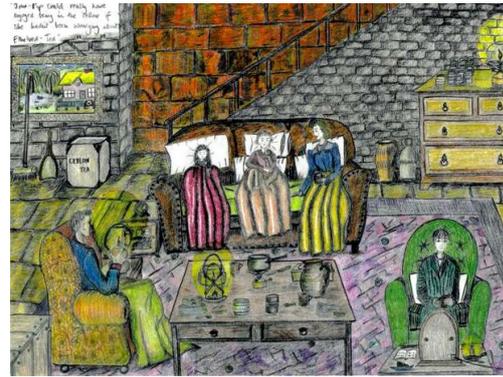
*Carrie King*



# The Life in the Wood with Joni-Pip Illustrations

by Carrie King

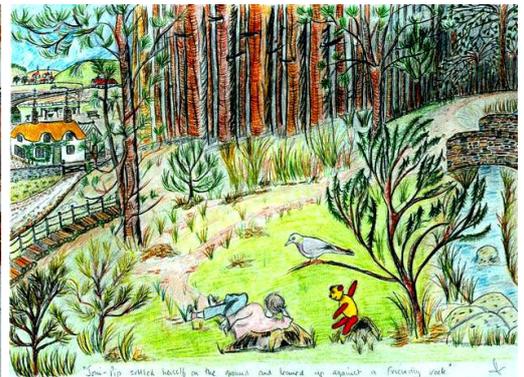
**1: Cellar**



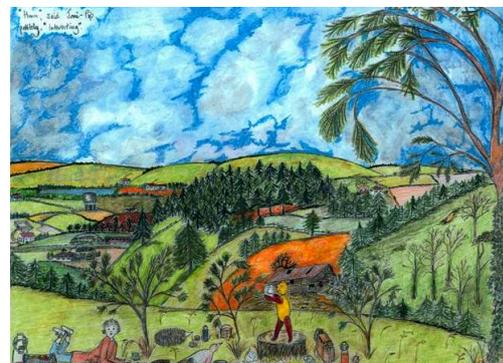
**2: Dining Room**



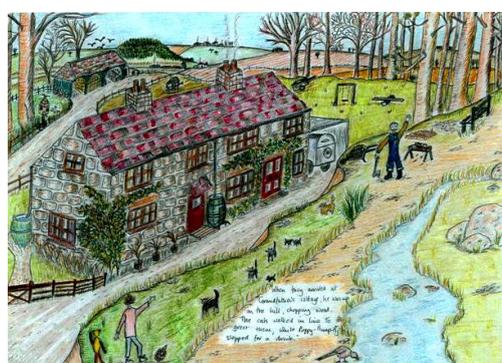
**3: Knotty Knook**



**4: The Clappers**



**5: The Crooked Cottage**



**6: Grandfather's Kitchen**



**7: Song of The River**



**8: The Ruin**



**9: Windy Woods**



**10: Life in the Wood**



**11: The Garden**



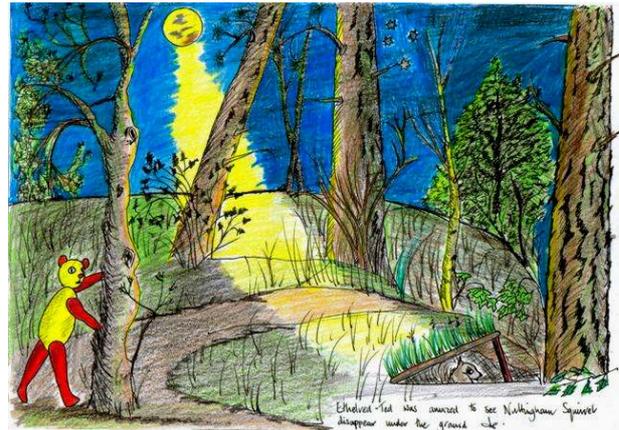
**12: Grandfather's Parlour**



### 13: The Wave



### 14: Moonlight on the Clappers



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Please give Michael your requested illustration number and title, along with your correct postal address [using this contact form](http://www.perpetualprose.com/contact) <http://www.perpetualprose.com/contact> and please allow at least 28 days to arrive. Thanks! CK