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**Newsletter No 79
February 2010**

"There seems to be so much more winter than we need this year."

- Kathleen Norris

Our [Book of the Month](#) is the appositely named FEBRUARY by Lisa Moore. See the [competition](#) page to win a copy and read our [interview](#) with the author.

The [recommended titles](#) this month include: BLACK WATER RISING by Attica Locke, a slick thriller set in Houston, Texas and the seminal HUNGER, written in 1890 by the Norwegian Nobel Prizewinner, Knut Hamsun and, in case everything is sounding too bleak altogether, there is Jane Gardam's THE MAN IN THE WOODEN HAT, sequel to OLD FILTH, and full of her usual wit and sparkle.

As St Valentine's Day approaches we're featuring a love song on our [Poetry Page](#) by the master of the genre, Robert Burns.

Do you agree with our reviews?
Would you like to have your say?
Leave your comments - we'd love to hear them.

Can you [Spot the Bookshop](#)?
Congratulations to Peter Jaggs the winner of January's competition for spotting the English Bookshop in Milan. A £10 book token is on its way.

Congratulations to the 20 winners of THE PERSONAL HISTORY OF RACHEL DUPREE by Ann Weisgarber. They are: Jennie Hayward, Brighton; Aileen Russell, Llanharry; Barbara Walton, Edinburgh; Clare Taylor, Stockport; Sarah Ludbrook, Epsom; Conchita Lagas, Leicester; Neil Vessey, Farnham; Linda Dubro, Colchester;

Kathy Cakebread, Chatham; Annie Dale, Bracknell; Gary Scott, Doncaster; Shy Sivapatham, Croydon; Liz Crockett, Pontyclun; Simon Lake, Penzance; Laura Stewart, Milnthorpe; Deryck Johnson, Saffron Walden; Kerry Karuna-Nidhi, Orpington; Karen Watson, Isle of Man; Sue Cook, Crickhowell and Anne Plumb, Bar Hill. Many thanks to Pan Macmillan publishers.

Welcome to all the new groups who have recently registered with us. Now is the time to request your **FREE BOOKS!** Just go to the [offers](#) page. This is for **ALL** registered groups (sorry, UK and Ireland groups only) not just new ones. If your group is not registered then just fill in the [form](#). It's a very simple process.
N.B. You only need to register once.

Don't miss this offer! Our friends at *newbooks* magazine are offering their Reading Group Starter Pack to our bookgroups and readers at a hugely reduced rate – more than £85 worth of materials delivered to your door for just £15! For more information, and to see what the pack contains, click [here](#).

Read about our [Bookgroup of the Month](#) the Books & Biscuits bookgroup from Peterborough. Fill in the [questionnaire](#) if you'd like to be a BGoTM.

Why don't you, or you and your bookroup, treat yourselves to a relaxing, stimulating Book Club Break while enjoying the landscapes of northern England?
These tailor-made breaks explore novels, poetry and plays that have inspired writers such as the Brontes and Elizabeth Gaskell in the dramatic northern settings in which they were written. For more information see the [English Bookclub Breaks](#) website.

Staying with the beautiful north, why not take in the Words by the Water

Literature Festival held at the Theatre by the Lake, Keswick, Cumbria from 5-14 March 2010?

Now in its ninth year, this lively and entertaining ten-day festival includes talks, discussions and performances and much more. 2010 highlights include: Lynn Barber, Martin Bell, Ken Bruce, Horatio Clare, Jeremy Hardy, Brian Keenan, Penelope Lively, Steven Pinker, Mark Vernon, Fay Weldon and Shirley Williams.

For information on tickets, discounts and programme see the [Ways with Words](#) website.

National Book Tokens are raising £10,000 for Book Aid International to celebrate their new Gift Card.

You can help by going to the National Book Tokens [website](#) and send an email to five friends who love books.

For each one you send, National Book Tokens will donate 10p.

There's also a competition to win £1,000 of new National Book Tokens Gift Cards.

In March, Bookgroup Info and National Book Tokens will be sending one of the new gift cards to all our registered book groups. Some of the cards will have £2 - £5.50 already loaded on them - so look out for yours and good luck!

Would your bookgroup like to be involved in choosing a literary prize? The [Hookline Novel Competition](#) is open to students and graduates of MA writing courses and is judged by book groups from around the UK. For details of the voting procedure, and how you can get involved, email Yvonne Barlow at editor@booklinethinker.com

The 2009 [T.S. Eliot Poetry Prize](#) has been won by Philip Gross for his collection THE WATER TABLE inspired by the Bristol Channel, "drawing out connections with mystery, depth, and the man-made world".

The [Costa Book of the Year 2009](#) has been won by poet Christopher Reid for THE SCATTERING an intensely personal and moving collection written as a tribute to his late wife.

Val McDermid, "queen of the psychological thriller", has won the [Cartier Diamond Dagger](#) award, which honours outstanding achievement in the field of crime writing.

[The Lost Man Booker Prize](#) is a one-off prize to honour books published in 1970. In 1971 the date on which the award was given moved from April to November and, as a result of these changes, there was whole year's gap when a wealth of fiction published in 1970 missed out on the opportunity to win the prize.

The shortlist will be announced in March but the international reading public will decide the winner. The overall winner will be announced in May.

You can win signed copies of the 2009 shortlist at the [Man Booker website](#).

[Radio 4 Bookclub](#) on Sun 7th and Thursday 11th February at 4pm features Clive James discussing the first volume of his autobiography, UNRELIABLE MEMOIRS. You can "listen again" if you miss either of these programmes and hear it on the i-player and on podcast during that week.

And lastly, [J D Salinger](#), the famously reclusive author of THE CATCHER IN THE RYE, has died aged 91.



Many thanks to all of you have emailed us to thank us for helping with setting up your group and making your reading choices. Please do remember to forward the newsletter to other members of your group so that they can take advantage of the offers and competitions.

Please email us at info@bookgroup.info if you wish to unsubscribe to the newsletter.



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