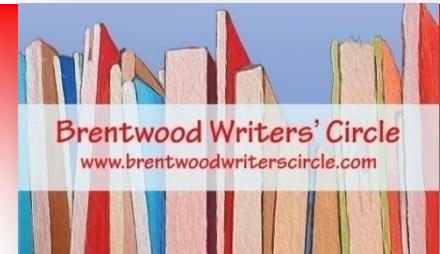




Write On

JANUARY

Volume 26 – Issue 1



DECEMBER REPORT

Chairman, Helen Finch welcomed everyone to the December meeting, which is always a festive occasion. Helen thanked everyone for the mince pies, and sausage rolls, and all the other goodies that members had brought with them to share. She also drew everyone's attention to the display of lovely Christmas cards created by member, Anita Sackett. Anita donated all the proceeds from sales to the Circle, which amounted to an impressive £30. Sylvia Kent also made £25 from sales of Frances Clamp's books, and HJ Furl made £30 for the Circle from sales of his book, 'Is It Today?' These gestures, together with the savings recently put into place, have helped wipe out the Circle's deficit and there is now a small surplus of funds, making the future of the Circle more secure.

President, Sylvia Kent, thanked everyone for attending and providing the festive fare, and also advertised the Billericay library Writers' Showcase. Sylvia will be able to provide more information on this to those who are interested.

Before the generous buffet table was enjoyed, members were treated to the winning stories of our latest competition. 2025 saw the debut of The Frances Clamp Award for Literary Achievement, a competition created in memory of our former president and loyal member of the Circle. The theme was historical non-fiction, but next year the theme will be children's fiction, both keen interests of Frances'.

Robert Welham thanked all those who entered the competition, and remarked that the judges found the entries a delight to read. The title of the competition was, The History of a Building or Structure, and the choices of buildings represented a wide variety with each script making careful selections of different aspects of their chosen structure. As proof of the quality of entries, and the difficulty the judges had in deciding the winners, there were two highly commended entries in addition to the three winners. As usual, the majority of errors made in scripts were simple and would have been spotted if the authors had read their scripts aloud, either to themselves, into a recorder or to another person. First place went to Samantha Hammerson, and featured an historical house she actually lived in for a while. Jim Reeve gained second place with a piece about Chelmsford



President, Sylvia Kent, presented prize money to the winners of The Frances Clamp Competition. Samantha Hammerson came first, Jim Reeve came second (not present) and Patrick Forsyth came third.

Photo: Laura Burkin

Museum, and Patrick Forsyth came third with his experience of a temple, set in grounds that evoked a spiritual atmosphere. Derek Davis and Rachel Langram were highly commended. Sam and Patrick read their entries, but Jim wasn't present at the meeting.

Helen then invited everyone to partake of the buffet, to talk and network with other writers, and peruse the books that Circle writers had brought along to display, and possibly sell.

Julie Gowers and Colin Taylor

ATTENDANCE
FOR
DECEMBER:
24 members;
3 guests = 27

GUESTS AND NEW MEMBERS

Three guests attended the December meeting, two of whom have joined BWC. A very warm welcome to both Brian Hughes and Matthew Gerrard.

The Jack Kendall Fiction Competition

Pick up your entry form for this year's fiction competition. The title is: A Strange Day in the City or Countryside. Forms will also be emailed to members.

JANUARY MEETING

Members' Showcase: Tales Of The Unexpected

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION 2026

Please pay your subscription today. You can pay by **cash, cheque, credit card or bank transfer**.

BWC bank details: NatWest

Account no.: 67969356

Sort code: 60-02-36

Members who joined in 2025 will not appear in the 2026 attendance register yet, so should sign in using the **New Members** sheet.



What has so absorbed the attention of this listener at our December meeting? A study in concentration, indeed. Photo: Robert Welham

A Happy and productive New Year to all BWC Writers

There will be a raffle at the January meeting, so remember your cash!

Please note, only members may enter BWC in-house competitions and read their work at Showcase Meetings.

WRITERS' QUOTES

"To present a whole world that doesn't exist and make it seem real, we have to more or less pretend we're polymaths. That's just the act of all good writing."

William Gibson

WORDS

If you knew instantly what a polymath is, well done. If like me you weren't too sure:

A polymath is a person with deep expertise in multiple, often diverse, subject areas, known for broad and comprehensive knowledge, like the famous "Renaissance man" Leonardo da Vinci, who excelled in art, science, and invention, combining logic and creativity to solve problems across fields. Polymaths are driven by immense curiosity, continuous learning, and the ability to connect disparate knowledge, differentiating them from a mere "jack of all trades" by achieving mastery, not just familiarity, in several domains. Now you know. 

OUR PROGRESS

HELEN FINCH – Still interviewing crafters for Traaditional Crafts book. Reviewing books for Armadillo Magazine and Search Press Crafts Books; regular column for Moulsham Times, Chelmsford.

SYLVIA KENT – Three articles for local press, plus two for the Woman Writer Journal. One talk to WI.

CHERYL TWYDELL – Finishing short story.

JULIE GOWERS – Read, 'Hello, It's Me' a short story, at the Great Dane in West Sussex, and 'The Appointment' at the West Sussex Writers open mic. session.

MAXINE BATTAMS – Working on a murder mystery book, traversing England and Italy

NIHAL PAUL – Building up short stories into a book.

COLIN TAYLOR – 'Simon and the Sorcerer' is almost complete.

DON'T BE A MUG, WITHOUT A MUG, BRING YOUR OWN MUG!

With a lid, with a handle, even personalized. Google search 'Portable Mugs' for a choice of hundreds. Portable mugs that have lids can be safely taken home to wash, or just bring an ordinary mug or cup.

You still get free coffee, tea and biscuits at the meeting, so no need to bring a mug pre-filled.

SPEAKERS

If you have any recommendations for future guest speakers, please let the committee know. We are interested in those who can talk on any writing associated subject, or any genre. Subjects can include an author's own writing journey, writing processes, topics such as publishing and marketing, computer know-how, websites and apps dealing with writing, and particularly anyone who has knowledge of AI and its role in modern day publishing and writing.



Brentwood Writers' Circle
is a member of
Brentwood Arts Council

Write On is compiled and
edited by Julie Gowers ©

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY – 2026

February 7th – Speaker: Anna Haywood

A writing mentor, editor, course and retreat leader, and Chair of Trustees of literature development agency New Writing South, Anna will talk about procrastination, and her recently published best seller, 'Broken Madonna'.

March 7th – Group Forum

Members' divide into small groups to discuss a specific area of writing, led by a member with experience in that area.

April 11th – Members' Showcase

An opportunity for members to read their work and receive advice and positive criticism. Winners of the Jack Kendall Competition read their entries.

CONTACT DETAILS

For information on BWC please contact **Helen Finch** (Chair) 07808 188090 helenfinch69@gmail.com or **Julie Gowers** (Secretary/Publicity) 0747 8339943 brentwoodwriterscircle1@gmail.com www.brentwoodwriterscircle.com facebook.com/brentwoodwriterscircle