

Each month we will focus on an inspiring author based in or writing about Wales! You'll have an introduction to their latest book, what inspires them to write, and any advice they have for young writers!

Get to know



Judith Barrow



Judith Barrow grew up in the Pennines, has degrees in literature and creative writing. She makes regular appearances at literary festivals and is the joint founder of the Narbeth Book Festival. She has lived in Pembrokeshire for nearly forty years.

Judith's other titles published by Honno: *A Hundred Tiny Threads*, *Pattern of Shadows*, *Changing Patterns*, *Living in the Shadows*, *The Memory*, *The Heart Stone*.

Summary:

An accident and a terrible lie tear a family apart. When sixteen-year-old Angie blames her younger sister for their brother's death, she changes their lives forever. Lisa is sent away, Angie spirals into self-destruction and they don't speak for thirteen years.

Returning in 1983 for their mother's funeral, Lisa quickly realises her sister is trapped in a dangerous marriage.

What does Lisa owe to the family that betrayed her? And if she tries to help, will she make things more dangerous for them all?

What, in your opinion, are the most important elements of good writing?

The ability to build a world the reader will believe in, one that when the story ends, it leaves the reader regretting they have to leave that world. So using all the senses to set the scenes. And to populate that world with totally believable characters; characters who are multi-layered, individual, and capable of both strengths and weaknesses.

If you had to describe yourself in just three words, what would those be?

Observant, tolerant, introspective.

What book is currently on your bedside table?

There are two, *Sparring Partners* by John Grisham (three novellas, only one read), and *Shuggie Bain* by Douglas Stuart (which I couldn't resist when it was bought for me!)

In what way have libraries influenced you during your lifetime?

My mother took me to the local library every Saturday morning from a very young age; I was able to borrow six books. The librarian knew the kind of books I liked (and the kind of books she thought I should read!). As I grew older I continued to go to every library in the area we lived, both for recreational reading, and to help with my school work. I always relished the quiet peace of libraries as an escape from my homelife. Nowadays, they have become more communal areas and have a broader purpose, and I think this reflects the needs of society today. It's good. As an author, I'm grateful that my books are on the shelves, and I've also been lucky enough to have been invited many times to give talks to various groups.