


The magazine of the National Library of Scotland

Discover

FREE

KILLER QUEEN

Val McDermid on writing, reading
and rocking out with her band

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No.46 Summer 2022



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New chapter for Discover

Welcome to our new and improved Library magazine

This is my first introduction to the Library's magazine as National Librarian and I am delighted to introduce our revamped 'Discover'.

I'd like to thank everyone – those who regularly read 'Discover' and those who do not – for taking the time to give us your views on the magazine. Your feedback helped us to shape this new and improved version, which we hope will be enjoyed by many people across the country.

Of course, the collections take centre stage – there's an in-depth piece about our copy of the Gutenberg Bible, which is a star attraction in our recently opened Treasures of the National Library of Scotland exhibition (pages 10–13).

We highlight the intricate and fascinating illuminations that are found within its pages and what these ornate illustrations mean and reveal to readers.

Curators also give us a taste of what is ahead in the next major exhibition due to open this summer, Pen Names, with the fascinating story of the enigmatic Elizabeth MacKintosh (pages 18–21).

Better known as both Josephine Tey and Gordon Daviot, this private individual really let her work speak for itself. She is one of Scotland's most acclaimed crime writers and yet very little is really known about her.

I was most privileged to take part in an online Library event alongside Witches of Scotland campaigners Claire Mitchell QC and Zoe Venditozzi on International Women's Day in March. They tell us about the campaign to secure an apology for all of those accused

and convicted of witchcraft – and the efforts to secure a national, state memorial – on pages 24–27.

Meanwhile, internationally renowned crime writer, Scotland's own Val McDermid, shares her favourite books and thoughts on crime fiction more generally on pages 14–17.

She also discusses her rise to fame and her perhaps unlikely hobby – as lead singer for the Fun Lovin' Crime Writers rock band, alongside some of this country's best-known (and biggest-selling) authors.

Head of Rare Books Helen Vincent also discusses one of her favourite novels, Catherine Carswell's 'The Camomile', on pages 22–23, and reveals why this should be held within higher esteem within the Scottish literary canon.

The book, described as a counterpart to Virginia Woolf's feminist classic 'A Room of One's Own', is set in early 20th-century Glasgow and the city's Mitchell Library plays a key role, offering a safe haven to a protagonist railing against the conventions of society.

Elsewhere, on pages 28–29, one of our wonderful interns, Alex Wilson, discusses the little-known stories they have been unearthing from our archives.

I really hope that you enjoy the new-look 'Discover'. Please let us know what you think about the issue, and what you would like to read about in future issues, by emailing us at discover@nls.uk

Thank you, and happy reading.

Amina Shah
National Librarian and Chief Executive



I am delighted to introduce the first edition of our new-look 'Discover' magazine"

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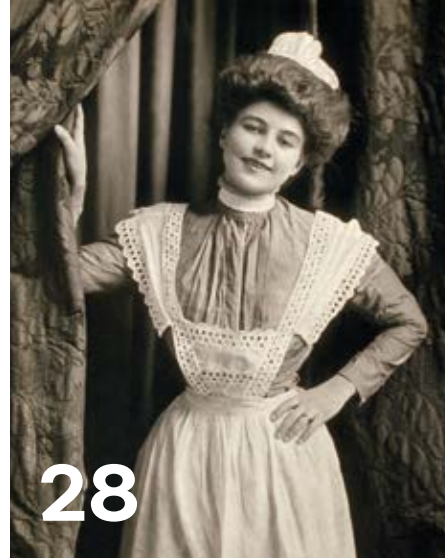


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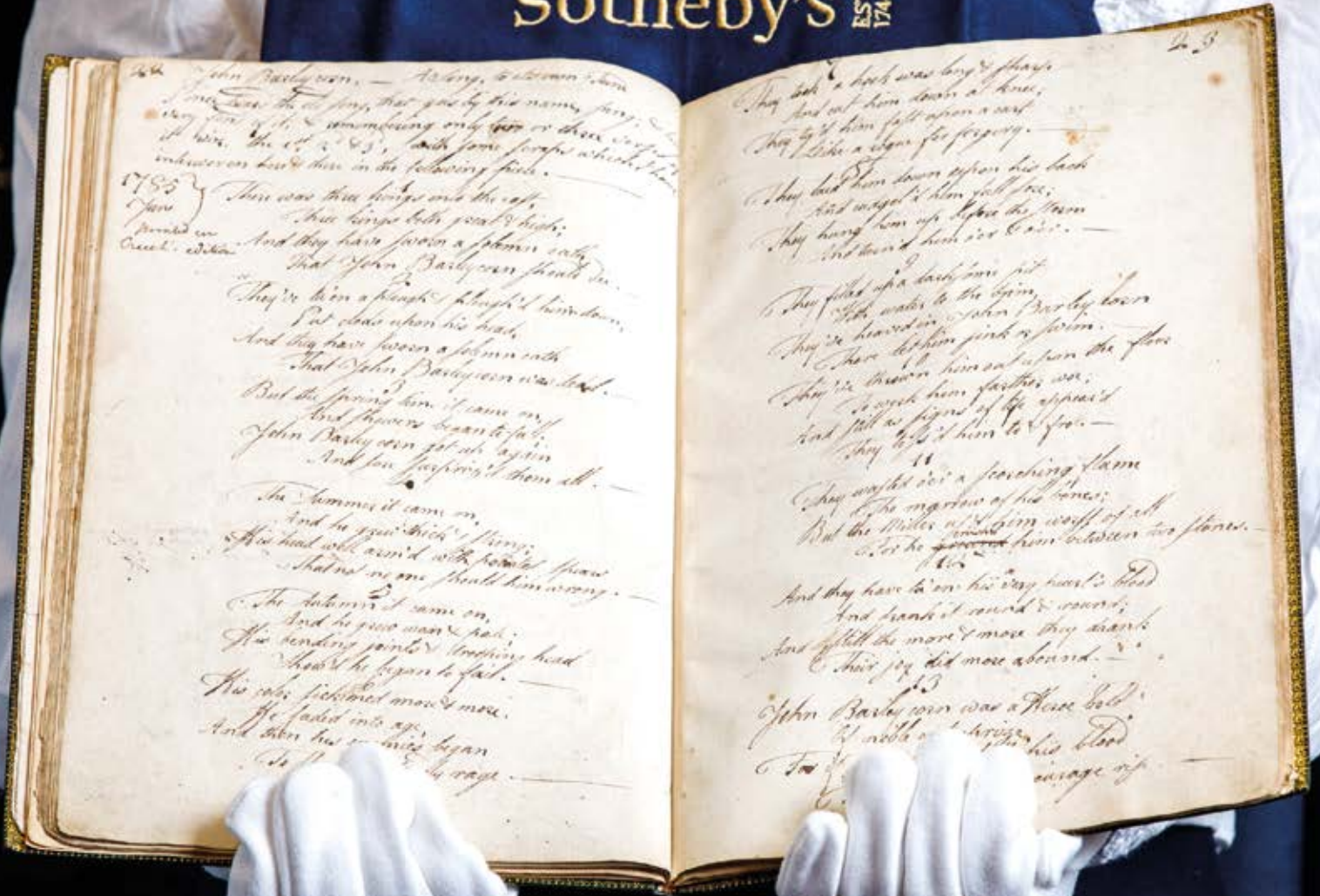
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Thank you for helping us bring the bards home



We were delighted to play a part, together with many literary organisations across the UK, including the National Trust for Scotland and Abbotsford, to save the Honresfield Library from being parcelled off and sold into private hands.

After an ambitious fundraising campaign to raise £15 million, led by the Friends of the National Libraries (FNL), the purchase was completed at the end of last year. Since then, we have been working with Sotheby's and the consortium to arrange the distribution of the items to their final homes in institutions across the UK.

We wanted to take this opportunity to acknowledge the tremendous generosity of the FNL and the many patrons, trusts, supporters and readers who donated to our Bring the Bards Home appeal. This includes supporters overseas, in particular in the United States.

The Blavatnik Honresfield Library (as it is now called, acknowledging the generous lead donation from the Blavatnik Family Foundation

to the FNL's campaign) is a treasure trove of items unseen by the public for almost a century. It comprises priceless manuscripts, rare first editions and irreplaceable letters by Robert Burns, Sir Walter Scott, Jane Austen and the Brontë siblings.

When it came up for sale in 2021, it was feared the collection would be split up and sold overseas and, at worst, back into private hands.

Thanks to the support of thousands of individuals, trusts and grant-givers, it has been saved for the public.

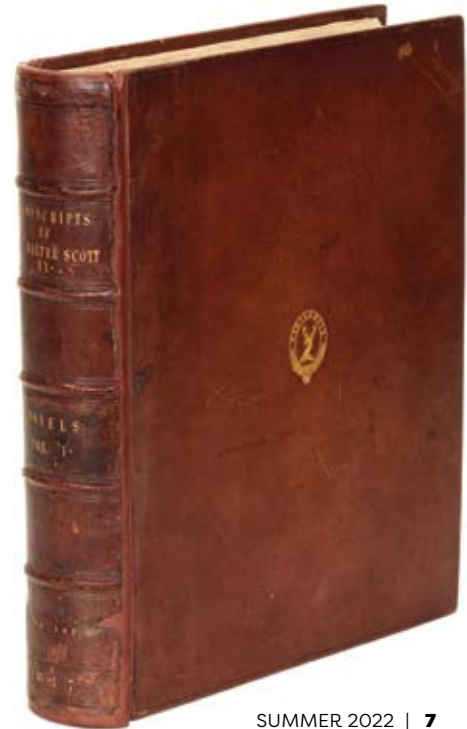
Walter Scott's manuscript of 'Rob Roy', along with dozens of letters and first editions, will be owned by and housed at the National Library of Scotland.

Robert Burns's First Commonplace Book will also be housed at the National Library but will be jointly owned with the National Trust for Scotland.

At the time of writing we had yet to receive the items but we are greatly

looking forward to doing so. In the months ahead there will be plenty of work taking place behind the scenes, from conservation and cataloguing to digitisation and planning, for a range of engagement activities.

We look forward to telling you more about our plans for public viewing of the star items in the coming months.



TREASURE TROVE
Robert Burns's First Commonplace Book. Right top and bottom, Sir Walter Scott's manuscript of 'Rob Roy'. © Sotheby's



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WINDOW TO THE PAST

Far left, a 15th-century psalter written and illuminated at Culross Abbey, Fife. Within the initial B that begins the first Psalm, there is an illustration of King David playing the harp. The particularly vibrant colour combinations seem a common feature in Scottish illumination at this time

Left, this 15th-century folded almanac probably belonged to a doctor in northern England. When it was folded up, it could be worn on the belt. The image here illustrates the connections believed to exist between the signs of the zodiac and certain parts of the human body

Extremely rare medieval manuscripts now online

We recently digitised and have now made available online a group of 240 medieval and early modern manuscripts from the national collections.

The volumes date from the 9th to the 16th century but a few later transcriptions of important texts have also been included. The project was achieved thanks to a generous donation from Mr Alexander Graham.

This digitised collection is international in origin but its particular interest results from the fact that a large part of the volumes were written in

Scotland. The survival rate of medieval Scottish manuscript volumes is generally low.

For religious manuscripts of Roman Catholic use – many of which were systematically destroyed during and after the Scottish Reformation – it is believed to be only one per cent.

Many other, non-religious manuscripts perished or disappeared along with them as a consequence of the dissolution of the monasteries and the dispersal of their libraries.

The digital images provide a new opportunity to gain some insight into medieval Scottish book production, a field in which many aspects are yet

to be explored. While the monasteries at Culross, Dunfermline and Perth were leading in Scottish manuscript production, secular writers were also at work.

The interests, tastes and knowledge of Scottish medieval scribes can all be studied in these images, as well as the development of the medieval Scottish book hand and styles of illumination. They also reveal much information on later owners of the manuscripts, who annotated them or added doodles as the volumes passed through their hands.

Our new digital web feature at nls.uk makes the scholarly

and beautiful work of medieval scribes in our collections more widely available.

Mr Graham said: “A few years ago I was given a tour of the Library’s stack floors, to include the Library’s collection of medieval manuscripts.

“I was unexpectedly captivated by what I was shown – fabulous illuminations, yellowing and annotated vellum pages and some rare works which survived destruction during the Reformation. I was compelled to fund a large-scale project to digitise and safeguard these items for the future, so that others could enjoy turning their pages just as I had.”



Illustrations in the Library's Gutenberg Bible

Magnificent mythical beasts, ornate lettering, prophets, towers and abstract art reveal a fascinating story within this medieval masterpiece

 **WORDS:** Dr Anette Hagan, Rare Books Curator (Early Printed Collections to 1700)

In 1805 or 1806, a private sale took place: the Advocates Library (the National Library's predecessor) bought a copy of the Gutenberg Bible from David Steuart (1747–1824), a prominent businessman, book collector and Provost of Edinburgh from 1780–1782.

The two-volume copy, which Steuart had acquired about 10 years earlier somewhere on the Continent, cost 150 guineas.

The Gutenberg Bible is named after Johann Gensfleisch zur Laden zum Gutenberg, who invented the first printing press in Europe that used moveable metal type. The book is a Latin Bible, a translation of the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament undertaken by the 4th-century church father St Jerome.

Johann Gutenberg's invention of the press and the production of the 'Biblia Latina' was a joint financial enterprise with the merchant Johann Fust. Having set up the press in his Mainz workshop by the early 1450s, Gutenberg first experimented with printing a small number of single-sheet texts such as indulgences, calendars and papal bulls.

In May 1452, work started on the Bible. It took the printers, including six typesetters, three years to produce around 180 copies of more than 1,200 pages each. No illustrations of Gutenberg's press exist – the



The Gutenberg Bible is named after Johann Gensfleisch zur Laden zum Gutenberg, who invented the first printing press in Europe that used moveable metal type”



earliest depiction of a printing press dates from 1499. The black ink he used consisted of soot, varnish and egg white, and centuries later has lost none of its rich dark hue.

Gutenberg combined different inventions that were already popular: paper, which had to be imported; a press, which was known from wine making; and single metal types, which were used for bookbinding decorations. His main single invention was a type-casting instrument that allowed him to create letters of exactly the same height. This was immediately noticed when, in March 1455, Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini, the future Pope Pius II, saw some quires exhibited at the Frankfurt Book Fair. He commented that they were “exceedingly neat and correct in their script”.

The type and layout of the Gutenberg Bible mirrored Bible manuscripts: the Textura type imitates the contemporary manuscript hand commonly used for large-size religious works and includes abbreviations and ligatures.

The text of the folio-size pages is set in two columns of 42 lines of text each. The imitation was deliberate: Gutenberg wanted his Bible to look like handwritten versions to avoid any startled reactions by his contemporaries.

Individual copies were sold in unbound gatherings so that the owners could commission a

ac tenebras. Et vidit
et factū ē velpē ⁊ manu
Dixit etiā de⁹. Produ
anime vivēntis ⁊ vol
sub firmamēto celi. Er
grandia. et omnē aīa
mōtabilē quā pduxe
suas. ⁊ omnē volatīl
Et vidit deus q̄ esset b
eis dicens. Crescite ⁊ m
replete aquas maris.
rentē sup terrā. Et factū
dies quīntus. Dixit qu
ducat terra aīam viv
iumenta ⁊ reptīlia. ⁊ b
species suas. Factūq;
bestias terre iuxta speci
ta ⁊ omnē reptīle terre
vidit deus q̄ esset boi
mus hoīem ad ymag
nostrā. ⁊ prelit piscib⁹
tīlib⁹ celi ⁊ bestijs univ
reptīlī qd̄ movetur ī
deus hoīem ad ymag
suā. ad ymaginē deī
sculū ⁊ feminā creavī
q; illis deus. ⁊ ait. Cre
mīnī ⁊ replete terrā. et
mīnī piscib⁹ maris. ⁊
et univērsis animā
sup terrā. Dixitq; de⁹



MEDIEVAL MASTERPIECE

St Paul on the road to Damascus, top, and mythical creatures such as interlocking green dragons, right, adorn the pages of the Gutenberg Bible. Next page, inset, the Book of the Prophet Zacharias and, downpage, the horned Moses seen in the Book of Exodus

binding according to their own taste and pocket.

Today, 48 complete copies containing all printed pages are known to exist; the copy at the Library is one of these.

Medieval handwritten works, in particular of a religious nature, were often adorned by colourful, ornate decorations of single letters and lines of text.

Gutenberg was, of course, acquainted with this kind of decorative art. He instructed the typesetters to leave perfectly calculated spaces for capital illuminations: six lines for the initial at the start of a new book of the Bible, four lines for a capital letter at the

start of a prologue or a chapter.

Gutenberg also experimented with producing red ink. When his efforts did not meet with success, he abandoned the idea of printing in red. As a result, all rubrications – that is, everything in red ink – were added by hand.

The rubricator used the same font and size as the printed text. Lines in red ink announce the end, signalled by the word ‘Explicit’, of prologues and books of the Bible, as well as the start of the following section, signalled by ‘Incipit’.

The combination of particular illuminations in the margins, fancifully decorated capital letters and rubrication makes each copy of the Gutenberg Bible unique. These decorations were usually commissioned by the first owner. They were carried out in local workshops, often as part of monastic scriptoria, and it is possible to assign particular decorating styles to certain workshops.

The Library’s copy is thought to have been illuminated in Erfurt, a city about 180 miles east of Mainz. It has fewer ornate decorations than other copies; still, there are numerous so-called historiated initials – decorations of capital letters telling a story – to charm those who had commissioned them as well as later readers.

Towers, dragon-like mythical animals, pen-feathering and abstract and geometrical patterns both in the margins and in the spaces left for initials complete the illuminations.

There are a number of tower depictions, which led earlier scholars to believe that the illuminations had been done in Scotland. The tower on page 10 of this magazine appears on the first page of the Book of Proverbs at the start of volume two. On the balcony below the top, a little figure with a green



garment is visible. Another tower marks the start of the Book of the Prophet Haggai, who is depicted holding a scroll and exhorting the people of Israel to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. The serious face of a man at the bottom of the tower adds weight to Haggai's solemn message.

Similarly, the beginning of the Book of the Prophet Zacharias is indicated by an illumination (right) in the margin showing a prophet in a tower, or perhaps an oriel, with a scroll that bears the word Agg[eu]s, the Latin name for Haggai.

The tower motif also indicates the beginning of the Epistle of James, with two windowless and unpopulated towers.

Fanciful mythical beasts, perhaps dragons, in the margins also attract attention. A slim, green, salamander-shaped creature with a quill in its mouth, coloured in blue, marks the end of St Paul's Epistle to Philemon and the beginning of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

A more elaborate illumination (left) showing a pair of green dragons with brown bellies locking necks takes up almost the whole space between the two columns of text. The same page has examples of more abstract decorations, including some pen feathering. The capital C has been left unfinished; the intricate floral tiles traced inside the C remain uncoloured.

The capital S shows signs of a failed attempt either at completion or perhaps repair: the blue colour on the left does not match the shade of that on the right side of the letter, and has seeped beyond the square assigned to contain the capital.

The start of the Book of Numbers is marked by a colourful initial capital L as well as two fanciful pen stroke stars.

The initial O at the beginning of the Book of Ecclesiasticus or

the Wisdom of Sirach contains an intriguing man's face and shows delicate feathering on the left.

But the most charming and indeed the most delicate and detailed historiated initials depict well-known scenes from different books of the Bible, and one relating to its Latin translation: St Jerome's prologue to the Bible, which starts with the words "Frater Ambrosius", is signalled by a historiated capital F. It accommodates a scene in which St Jerome, shown as a monk with a tonsure and a pen in his hand, sits in front of a lectern with an open book: he is depicted translating the Bible into Latin.

At the beginning of the Book of Exodus, an illumination (right) of the capital H shows Moses holding up the tablets with the Ten Commandments and sporting two horns. The horns are probably the result of a mistranslation by St Jerome, who understood the more metaphorical Hebrew word for 'rays of light' literally as 'horns'.

Job is depicted in a white tunic with bare arms and legs that are covered in little red dots – sores inflicted upon him by the Devil, according to the second chapter of the Book of Job (page 31 of the Bible).

The Book of Lamentations begins with the words "Et factum est" (page 11 of the Bible). The historiated initial E shows a man sitting in a field and looking down on a townscape. This is the prophet Jeremiah lamenting the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. The initial A at the start of the Book of the Prophet

Daniel is illuminated with the famous scene of Daniel in the lions' den. Two lions the size of dogs sit peacefully on either side of the prophet.

A depiction of the unwilling prophet Jonah, with his upper body sticking out of the fish that swallowed him, marks the start of the Book of the Prophet Jonah. The upper part of the historiated initial E shows a hand holding perhaps the wheel in a boat filling with water.

The prophet Micah is shown in the initial U reading from a scroll and exhorting the people of Israel. This initial is rather generic; the same motif in a different style also appears at the beginning of the Book of the Prophet Joel.

Most illuminations in the New Testament are abstract patterns filling in capital letters. There is, however, a marginal illustration of the Evangelist St Mark. He is depicted sitting in a

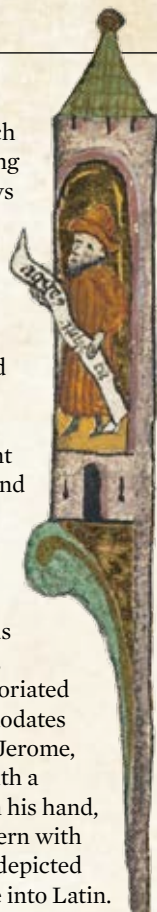
tower writing his Gospel. The lion in front of him is the symbol of St Mark.

Only a couple of historiated initials appear in the New Testament. A fortified city with a wall and open gate illustrates the beginning of St Paul's Epistle to Titus but bears no direct relation to the epistle.

Finally, St Paul on the road to Damascus (previous page) is shown within the initial P at the start of St Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians, even though the story is in the Acts of the Apostles. Rays of light emanate from the sky as Saul, as St Paul was then, is falling off his horse.

The Library's fully digitised copy of the Gutenberg Bible is free on our website, nls.uk. Even the watermarks are visible, and you can zoom in on the illuminations to see the fine details of the artists' work.

Our copy of the Bible is part of our Treasures exhibition at George IV Bridge, Edinburgh. *



All killer no filler

The Queen of Tartan Noir, the inimitable Val McDermid, on the appeal of crime fiction, the writers who inspire her... and her side gig fronting a rock band

What is it about these stories about horrendous events that people love? It's exciting and a safe place to be scared. It's like when you go on a roller coaster at the fair – you're screaming your head off but then do it all over again. It's exciting and scary but you know nothing bad is going to happen to you."

Few would dare disagree with Val McDermid when it comes to the enduring appeal of the sinister world of crime fiction. After all, Scotland's 'Queen of Tartan Noir' is a master of murder, mayhem and mystery, having sold more than 17 million such books – and in 40 languages.

Her major characters – psychologist Tony Hill and detective Carol Jordan (whose stories became hit show 'Wire in the Blood'), cop Karen Pirie, private eye Kate Brannigan, and journalists Lindsay Gordon and Allie Burns – have delivered us everything from dismembered body parts and medieval torture to sexual violence.

"There are lots of reasons we love crime but

one of them, a really powerful one, is that there's a comfort in knowing that whatever the bad things are, there are people out there who will put a stop to them," says McDermid, who is also a journalist and broadcaster. "It doesn't matter how terrible human beings are to each other, there's a Tony Hill or a Karen Pirie to sort it out. Bad things happen to the bad people.

"The reason we don't like to admit to is that fantasy of killing all the people we'd quite like to see the back of. I've killed a few news editors in my time. You know that song in 'The Mikado', 'I've Got a Little List'? Well, I've got a big list!"

McDermid's other big list? The crime novels she has read. Not only is she one of the genre's biggest stars, she is one of its biggest fans.

"I got hooked on the crime novel very early. I was addicted to reading. I loved stories. As an only child it was my escape when the grown-ups were being boring. We lived across from the Central Library, which meant I lived there. But I also spent a lot of time with my grandparents and





Who knew I'd
be spending my
60s fronting a
rock band?"





CRIMINALLY GOOD The Fun Lovin' Crime Writers includes, from left, authors Chris Brookmyre, Doug Johnstone, Mark Billingham, Val McDermid, Stuart Neville and Luca Veste. But McDermid, below, insists she won't be giving up her day job to become a full-time singer. Photos courtesy of The Fun Lovin' Crime Writers and Little, Brown



they had only two books in their house – a Bible and a copy of Agatha Christie's 'The Murder at the Vicarage'.

"I read and reread the Christie and it got me interested in murder stories. Then I discovered she had written more than one book!

"My problem was they were all in the adult library. So I stole my mum's library ticket, went to the library and made a pitiful wee face, asking, 'Can I get a book for my mum? She's not well...' Bless the lovely librarians, it worked for five years until I got my adult ticket. But by then I'd read round the crime fiction shelves."

Indeed, Kirkcaldy's "well-stocked" library must claim some credit for McDermid's career: "I wouldn't be a writer without the public library system. My parents encouraged me to read but couldn't afford to buy swathes of books,

certainly not at the rate I read them. I used to read the Chalet School books [by Elinor M. Brent-Dyer] and one of the characters grows up to become a writer. I was nine or 10 and thought, 'Wow, you can get paid for it, it's a job. That's what I'm going to do, I can tell stories'."

But not everyone working in the mines and factories of Kirkcaldy were on the same page. "It was a standing joke, 'What's she going to be when she grows up, a writer?', and everyone laughed," explained McDermid. "Folk like us didn't become writers. At university, my friends used to laugh at me as well. I enjoy having the last laugh now."

Being so "gallus", as she puts it, has fared her well, as illustrated by how she became the first student from a Scottish state school to attend St Hilda's College, Oxford. Describing her entrance interview, McDermid explained: "The principal said, 'Oh, we've never taken anyone from a Scottish state school before'. And being 16 and gallus, I just firmly said, 'Well, it's about time you started'."

"So that was how I got in. I look back and think, 'Where did that come from?'. But my dad was a great Burns man who brought me up to believe I was as good as anybody else – 'A Man's a Man For a' That'. That was a great asset."

She added: "I didn't want to follow the well-trodden paths people from Kirkcaldy High School trod. I wanted a wider world. I didn't fit, and I didn't understand why. At university I discovered the feminists and the lesbians and realised why I'd felt like an outsider."

After university, McDermid started working as a journalist – and her experiences in the misogynistic newsrooms of the 70s and 80s have helped

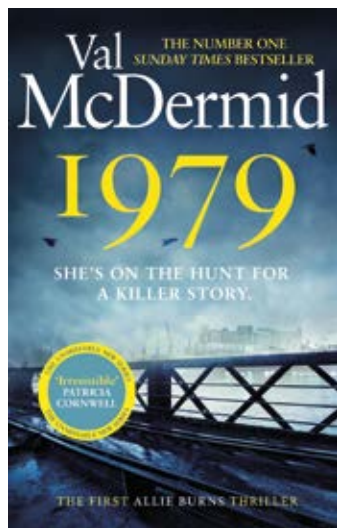
to shape her latest bestseller, '1979', about reporter Allie Burns. Like Allie, by day McDermid was reporting on crime. But by night, she was writing and reading crime fiction by the likes of Ruth Rendall and Reginald Hill.

"I've always liked writers who were just a little off the mainstream, so while I enjoyed Margery Allingham and loved Josephine Tey – who is, along with Agatha Christie, the best of that tranche of writers – I was drawn to Patricia Highsmith. The moral and ethical balancing act in her books was not of its time.

"William McIlvanney kind of gave us permission to write about the streets we recognised, working-class lives, people who spoke in the speech rhythms of the streets. In the UK it used to be all village mysteries and police procedurals, but things started to change in the late 80s with people like me, Ian Rankin, John Harvey and Martin Edwards. Writers started to lean more towards social justice."

As for contemporaries and rising stars, she can recommend "plenty": "I've had the great privilege for the best part of 20 years of doing the 'New Blood' panel at Harrogate [the Theakston Old Peculier Crime Writing Festival], which means I've had a front-row seat for new and emerging writers. I've been there at the beginning for people like Abir Mukherjee, Belinda Bauer, Will Dean. But there are so many good writers out there, like Elly Griffiths and William Shaw. What I like is the versatility of the genre just now. People constantly surprise me.

"At the same time, we've got writers looking at Scotland through really different eyes. I love Doug Johnstone's Skelf family books. It's three generations of women who run



It was a standing joke that I wanted to be a writer. I'm enjoying having the last laugh"

a funeral parlour and a private investigations agency. You must read them. No one is writing about contemporary Edinburgh in all its black and blues better than Doug."

Places and settings are "really important" to McDermid, who lives in Edinburgh with her geographer wife, Professor Jo Sharp. "You can tell when people don't know or don't understand the place they're writing about. All my books, the settings have distinctive qualities that make them the right place to set that story. But what always comes first is the

story. Who dies, why do they die, what's the motive, what's the unravelling going to be. Once I have a sense of the story, I know whose story it is, then where it will work."

But what advice does McDermid have for budding writers? "Persevere. Figure out your most productive time of day and ringfence that time. And don't let anybody tell you what you're doing isn't important. I heard a lot of that. People laughed at me for a long time. Ian Rankin and I always say it took us 10 years to be an overnight sensation."

Next up is the release this summer of '1989', the follow-up to '1979'. There is "a lot to get into", including the Lockerbie disaster, Hillsborough, the Aids crisis and the collapse of the Soviet Union. "There's a bit that goes back to the Second World War," added McDermid. "I like to keep my head busy."

It would seem she also likes to keep her head banging – as the lead singer with rock band the Fun Lovin' Crime Writers, alongside authors Luca Veste, Doug Johnstone, Stuart Neville, Chris Brookmyre and Mark Billingham. But could singing become a full-time gig?

"Oh, no, don't," she laughed. "At least one of my band members would like that to be our main job but it's not going to be. It's fun."

At the time of writing, the band – who perform on-brand hits such as 'Watching The Detectives' – was preparing for a gig at Edinburgh's Queens Hall on Good Friday. "Any jokes about us getting crucified will be stricken from the record!" McDermid added.

"Who knew I'd be spending my 60s fronting a rock band? But there are lots of things about my life I think, 'Who knew?'" *

McDERMID'S MUST-READS:

'Treasure Island', by Robert Louis Stevenson (1883)

"Pretty much every year I reread 'Treasure Island'. It's the perfect book, it's got everything – great narrative, great settings, great characters."

'Girl Meets Boy', by Ali Smith (2007)

"The way she writes about gender and sexuality, it's brilliant – perceptive, clever, funny and beautiful. I can't wait to get my hands on 'Companion Piece' [Smith's follow-up to her Booker-shortlisted Seasonal Quartet]."

'The Second Life', by Edwin Morgan (1968)

"It's got love poetry, concrete poetry, science fiction poetry... everyone will find something."

BOOK THAT CHANGED HER LIFE:

'Sexual Politics', by Kate Millett (1970)

"It completely altered the way I read things, the way I looked at the world, the way I looked at myself. It put me in a place where I understood who I was."

... AND THE CLASSIC SHE COULDN'T FINISH:

'Captain Corelli's Mandolin', by Louis de Bernières (1994)

"I just couldn't see the point, I'm sorry. I'm not dissing Louis de Bernières but for me it was the wrong book every time I tried it."