

SPRING 2018

# TALLISTON

T I M E S

BRAND NEW

## *Adventures*

For our *spring edition*, we reveal new plans and people at our amazing house and gardens



NEWS & EVENTS FROM OUR MAGICAL HOUSE & GARDENS

# TALLISTON

T I M E S

*Spring 2018*

21<sup>ST</sup> MARCH – 21<sup>ST</sup> JUNE

## MARCH

### *THE WRITERS' CIRCLE*

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> March

The Talliston writers' circle is back! A supportive group for all levels of talent and experience, our aim is to inspire writers to create their best, most engaging new work, and to share stories that delight and surprise. *Next dates: Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> June, Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> September, Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> December.*

## APRIL

### *TUDOR & ELIZABETHAN*

#### *GREAT DUNMOW*

Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> April

Join local historian Kate J Cole for one or both talks on Talliston's home town during the Reformation and Essex Witch Trials. Includes light supper (from 14:30).

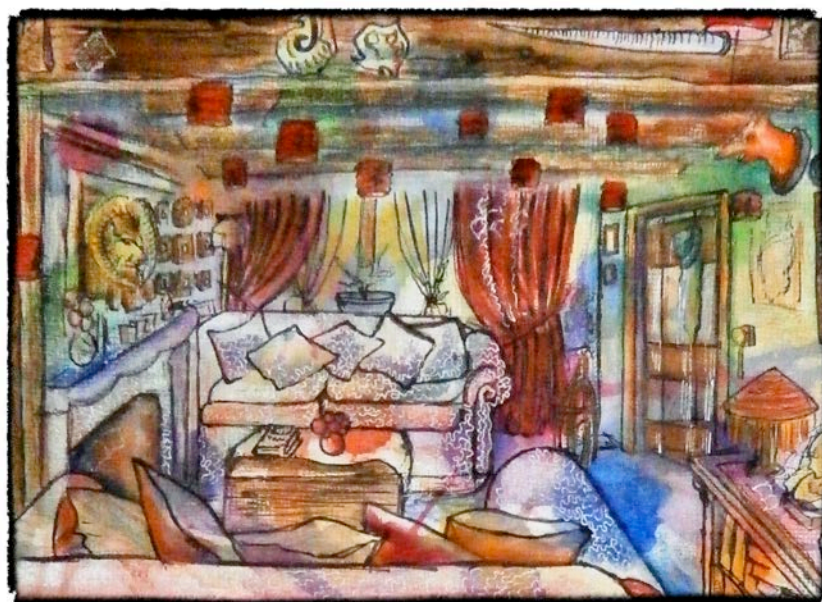
## JANUARY – DECEMBER

### *MIDNIGHT AT RAVNSBRAE*

Every last Saturday of the month

An immersive, interactive nightmare that sees you arrive at a desolate house upon the Scottish cliffs. Inside you'll meet strange occupants, dine in a candlelit chapel and spend a night in the family's dead child's bedroom all the while exploring its rooms and unravelling its mysteries.

[WWW.TALLISTON.COM](http://WWW.TALLISTON.COM) FOR DETAILS



WATERCOLOUR © AMY IRVING 2013

## Welcome to the *spring edition* of our quarterly house bulletin

It is with a great sense of excitement that the end of winter is marked this year with more than just a return of green leaves and the Carnival tulips in the rectory gardens. *The Stranger's Guide To Talliston*, the young adult fantasy adventure inspired by Britain's Most Extraordinary Home is a reality. While the hardback is not due until early 2019, head over to [Unbound.com](http://Unbound.com) to pledge your support and grab yourself a limited first edition.

*Jet*

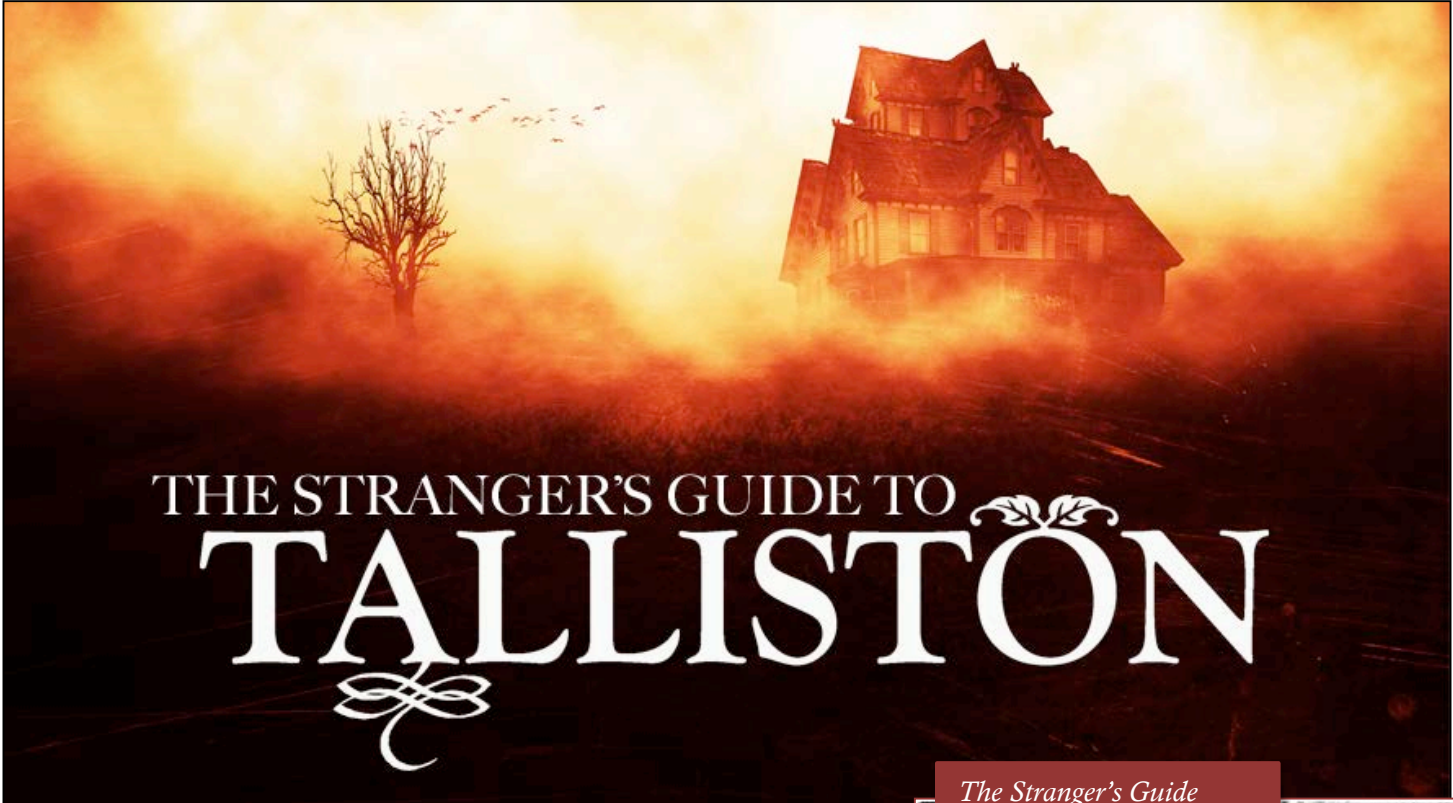
## The Talliston Room Plans

*Premium A0 architectural plans and elevations of the house & gardens*

Packed with stunning detail by architect Sam N. Davey, charting each location of the project. Available now from [WWW.FOLKSY.COM](http://WWW.FOLKSY.COM).







# THE STRANGER'S GUIDE TO TALLISTON

**W**RITING A NOVEL, ESPECIALLY ONE as labyrinthine as *The Stranger's Guide To Talliston*, is an arduous enough task. So when the publishers agreed to my request to create a deluxe special edition of the book as long as we could prove there was sufficient readership to warrant the process, we all knew that the hardest task was yet to come. Our lives are filled with groups, charities, friends, companies and brands all screaming at us that their product requires our attention and investment. So why should *The Stranger's Guide* warrant your pennies? Well, give me a few moments of your time and perhaps we will discover the answer.

## EMBRACE ALL, FOLLOW NONE

Like the house, the novel shows how the extraordinary lies within the ordinary, how by listening to ourselves, by finding our flow, we can create the life we want from the one we don't. For me it was important that the core idea behind the creation of the house and gardens were central to the story of thirteen-year-old Joe and his journey from being an abandoned and lonely boy into the labyrinth that will test and change him. Yet more than this, it holds within it vital messages that I feel essential for children in the modern world:

- Embrace All  
*The Stranger's Guide To Talliston* offers a viewpoint of total and unconditional inclusiveness, and how we should accept each and every culture, faith and life choice as having equal

*The Stranger's Guide*  
Ways to support the novel



### SPECIAL EDITION HARDBACK

First edition hardback, the e-book and your name in the back of the book. £24.

### THE BUTTERFLY EDITION

SE + The Talliston Book of Days. £45.

### THE BUMBLEBEE EDITION

SE + The Talliston Book of Days. £55.

### THE OAK EDITION

SE + The Talliston Room Atlas. £60.

### THE SHIP EDITION

SE + Talliston A0 floorplans. £65.

### THE LABYRINTH EDITION

SE + hand-carved slate labyrinth. £75.

### THE BRONZE KEY

Under 16s Visit. SE + tour + food. £100.

### THE SILVER KEY

Tea & Tour for Two. SE + tour + food. £120.

### THE GOLDEN KEY

Dinner & Stayover for Four. SE + tour + food. £250.





## THE RULES

- \* Rule #1: Nowhere Is Safe.
- \* Rule #2: Always Have A Way Out.
- \* Rule #3: Be Invisible.
- \* Rule #4: Don't Make Friends.
- \* Rule #5: Do Not Talk To Dead People.

*Thirteen-year-old Joe's set of rules play a big part in the unfolding story*

value and status. As each location in Talliston is a dwelling built on the last magical places on earth, the book also focuses on the magic and spiritual teaches of each time and place (New Orleans hoodoo, ancient Irish mythologies, Navajo shamanism, et al), and how it has been interpreted by each culture or occupant.

### • Follow None

The novel promotes a core message focusing on the extraordinary within the ordinary – and how we each have within us the power to create our own lives. And not by a fairy godmother waving a magical wand, but by dreaming and then doing to bring those dreams to life. Following none is all about making life choices based on what will make us most happy and most rewarded – even if that means a quarter century of transformational design.

### • Nurture Nature

The book has a strong ecological message, focusing on nurturing our environment rather than consuming it. It teaches us to

produce not consume, and to cherish the natural world as sacred. It shows animals as being more clever and far more wise than us.

### WRITTEN OVER TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

This novel is part of an extraordinary journey. It began in 1990, when John Tode bought the UK's most ordinary house: a three-bedroomed, semi-detached, ex-council house in Essex. Over the next twenty-five years, John Trevillian worked with more than 130 volunteers, artists and artisans, transforming it into Talliston House & Gardens. Now internationally famous and dubbed "Britain's Most Extraordinary Home" (The Sunday Times), John Tarrow has fictionalised that amazing adventure.

Each room is a chapter in the book, an exploration of the times, places and adventures found in the towers, palaces, deserts and oceans, in the haunted bedrooms and cabins in the woods. The boy links those separate locations with a narrative that explores how being yourself is the hardest destination to reach. Joe's parents have given him a set of rules that restrict and control him – and on his journey Joe finds out just what they have been taught to him.

I truly hope that *The Stranger's Guide To Talliston* will delight, challenge and inspire children and adults alike – and shows that the world of our dreams can be found in the most unlikely of places. Part of the proceeds of the novel will go towards creating a permanent trust to ensure that the future of the house and gardens are secured forever, providing a venue for anyone who wishes to escape the modern world into one of wonder and imagination. I hope also that when the deluxe copy of the hardback is published, you will be receiving a copy to see just what I mean...

## THE TALLIS STONE

Upon the back of the Late Neolithic standing stone is carved a simple labyrinth, marked with thirteen hollows.



EXPLORE THE BRAND NEW LABYRINTH AT [WWW.TARROW.CO.UK](http://WWW.TARROW.CO.UK)



## THE TALLISTON RESIDENCIES

# Jools Abrams

*Award-winning writer, Jools Abrams-Humphries takes up her Talliston tenancy with plans for a creative 2018*

**L**ATE 2017, ALMOST on the deadline for submissions, Jools Abrams discovered the residencies initiative at Talliston. The Writer in Residence post was established to provide resources for a writer over one year from October to October, using Talliston's interiors as an inspirational place to write, research and create. The role, along with the Artist in Residence and the Artisan in Residence is part of a community committed to creative excellence and support.

## JOOLS ABRAMS

Jools is originally from the North West, but has lived in Hertfordshire for twenty years. She has been writing stories since she could hold a crayon, inspired by family anecdotists, and now writes stories for adults and children, long and short, which she has performed at various venues in London. She has written two novels for young adults, a middle grade novel, screenplays, mentored by The Script Factory and performed by Rupert Graves, feature journalism for the local press and interviews for Writer's Minds, the online magazine of The Society of Children's British Writer's and Illustrators, of which she is a member and county volunteer. An award winning short story was published by Walker books as part of The Book



of Bedtime Stories and in 2017 she won the Wasafiri International Life Writing Prize. She is now developing this story into a novel, with the help of some inspiration and writing space at Talliston.

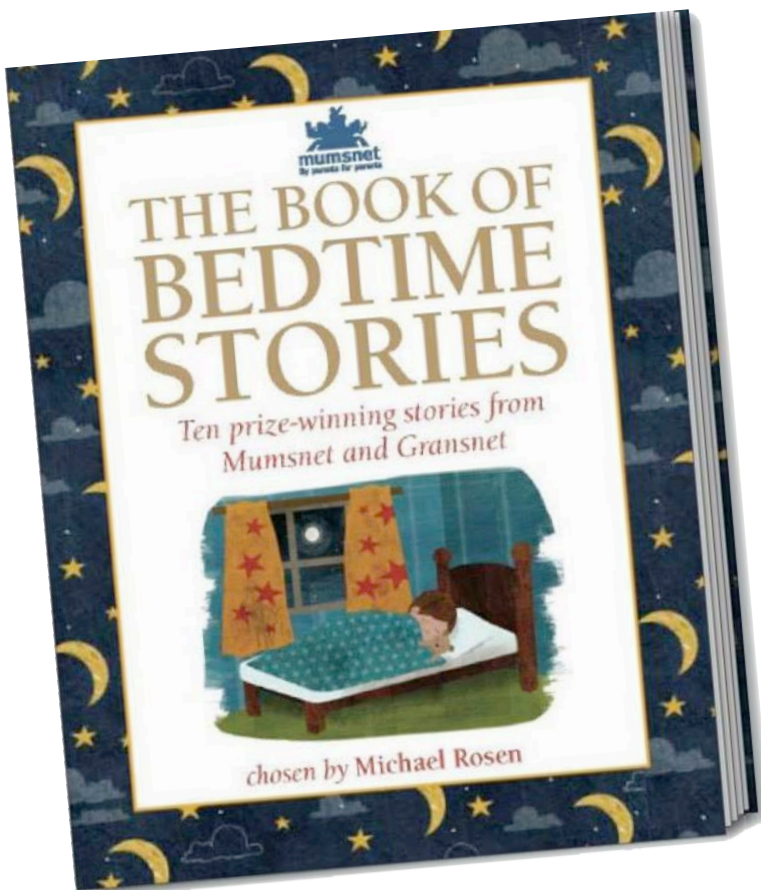
In other life, she is a qualified primary teacher with over twenty five years' experience, which helps her deliver English tutoring and creative writing workshops, and a parent to two children, one working in the media in London and one studying to be a musician. Her husband is the token scientist in a family of creatives and accompanies her on adventures travelling, most recently to Vietnam.

*How did you come to know about Talliston House?*

I was working in education at Hatfield Forest, for the National Trust, when the operations manager came back from a visit with tales and photographs of this remarkable







place. It sounded right up my street, my stories are inspired by settings, places and people I meet from travels around Britain and the wider world. I vowed I would visit too, but time played its usual tricks, throwing other work and writing my way, so I never had the opportunity to satiate my curiosity.

*How did you come to apply?*

It was one of those kismet moments, tangled in the labyrinth of a lost Twitter feed, I hopped from Google to page and saw the opportunity on the website. It seemed fate was telling me the time was right. However, I'd discovered it late, the deadline was two days ahead. I set aside other projects and wrote a short story based on the given title, *An Extraordinary Room*.

Normally a short story will take me a month or two to write, a novel a year or longer. I always buy a new notebook just for the purpose, make long hand and printed versions, scribbles, notes from workshops, mind maps, drawings, cross references and research, you get the gist.

My Talliston story took me two days. There's nothing like a deadline to sharpen the mind. The inspiration was already there. I had just completed a short story based on a memory of a room in my grandparent's house (ironically a council house semi in Manchester), that went on to win the Wasafiri Prize. The idea grew and as I write mostly for children, I decided that would be my focus. A young girl finds an abandoned room when she is

helping clear out her recently passed grandmother's house, the room already has an occupant, a streetwise, talking cat, who offers possibilities for adventure through a magical door.

I sent off the story and turned back to other projects, tried to put it out of my mind, until one day in late summer when I finally visited Talliston on a tour and discovered for myself what an extraordinary place it is. It felt familiar, I felt like the house was welcoming me, holding me under its spell, it felt like my imagination had come home, the places in my stories had come to life. The Cabin is a Canadian scene in my new novel, The Office shelves stored books I have in my own home, The Fountain Courtyard echoed a character from my novel of magical realism, *Girl in The Box*, The Boathouse is in my middle grade story, *There's a Mermaid in my Garden*, the Voodoo Kitchen occupant is just like a character from a short story I wrote last year.

We gathered in The Watchtower at the end of the tour, where I was introduced to John. When he found out who I was he announced I was to be the new Writer in Residence. I may have let out a whoop, I may have jumped on the poor man, needless to say, I was delighted.

*What plans do you have as writer in residence?*

I've got lots of ideas which I hope to develop through creative meetings with the team in early 2018, collaborative storytelling with other writers, artists and Tallistonians. I'm already booked in for my first residency in May and will use that time to develop my novel and re-write the short story that got me the position in the first place.

I want to reinstate the Writer's Circle as a friendly, supportive quarterly critique group for authors, further information will go on the website soon with a planned first meeting in March. I have plans for workshops and masterclasses in flash fiction and writing for children and will help with Talliston tours and events when I can, including Talliston at Hatfield Forest Woodfest in the autumn of 2018. I'll be promoting Talliston house and gardens, its ethos, theme and inspiration via my writing connections and my website, literature festivals and groups like SCBWI, and I've bought a brand new notebook!

*Jools at the SCBWI conference dressed as the Faraway Tree*



READ MORE FROM JOOLS AT [WWW.SHEWHODARESWRITES.BLOGSPOT.COM](http://WWW.SHEWHODARESWRITES.BLOGSPOT.COM)



# Join the adventure!

*Help support by pre-ordering the Talliston novel*

- SPREAD THE WORD

The Stranger's Guide To Talliston will delight, challenge and inspire children and adults alike – and shows that the world of our dreams can be found in the most unlikely of places. I am sure your members all know teenagers who would be interested – especially as it opens and takes place in and around Great Dunmow.

- SUPPORT FOR THE DELUXE EDITION

The normal hardback is out late 2018, but my publishers have also agreed to produce a beautiful deluxe bidding for sales through the house and for the many Friends of Talliston). For this edition we need a certain amount of pre-orders, and are contacting local groups to see if they would like to support this work, and to be credited in the book as a sponsor.

*You'll find full details of the novel and rewards at [unbound.com/books/talliston](http://unbound.com/books/talliston)*

[www.talliston.com](http://www.talliston.com)

[info@talliston.com](mailto:info@talliston.com) | 07760 171100

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NEXT ISSUE  SUMMER 2016  21ST JUNE 2016

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# phannatiq

Talliston presents a **free fashion afternoon** for all. The house turns into a **fantastical dressing-up box** for a day of fun and fashion as we invite you to come with friends, create your own catwalk and snap photos and video of your **wild wardrobe experiments**. Men and women, young and old will find an excess of inspiration scattered across the times and places of Britain's most extraordinary home.



22.04.2018

EMAIL [INFO@TALLISTON.COM](mailto:info@talliston.com) TO ATTEND