

## The 17<sup>th</sup> TARS Literary Weekend 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> April 2024

### The Crown Hotel, Harrogate

Unlike in *The Picts* and *The Martyrs*, a Harrogate postmark does not mean doom and gloom, quite the reverse, as this is our location for the 17<sup>th</sup> TARS Literary Weekend. Far from being *not welcome at all*, all are welcome for what promises to be a first-rate weekend.



It's a mystery to many how each weekend's programme seems to outdo previous years, but the 2024 weekend could just be our best yet for three key reasons:

**Firstly**, in a break with tradition we're staying in a 3-star hotel with all the luxuries of ensuite bedrooms (with TVs and tea and coffee making facilities), and all the facilities you would expect. **Secondly**, we've put together an amazing line-up of speakers talking on a variety of AR and Swallows and Amazons themes; and **thirdly**, we've been able, with an allowance for inflation, to keep the cost similar to those in 2020 and 2022.

**The Crown Hotel** has a history dating back over 300 years and has an enviable central location just moments away from many of Harrogate's most popular attractions and just a 5-minute walk from the railway station with its links to Leeds and York. **Harrogate** itself has an amazing variety of attractions for your free Saturday afternoon, including the famous Betty's tea rooms, the Royal Pump Room Museum, the impressive Turkish baths, the Royal Horticultural Society's Harlow Carr Garden, the Stray, the Valley Gardens, a five-star shopping experience or even a trip into the nearby Yorkshire Dales.

### The stars of the weekend, however, will be our speakers.

As the page opposite shows we have a fabulous line-up comprising both TARS members and invited guests. We are honoured to have **Michelle Magorian**, author of the classic *Goodnight Mr Tom* coming to speak to us. She is a lifelong Ransome fan and one of her books, *Impossible!* has several references to AR and the books. She will tell us how Ransome has inspired not just her writing but also her early life and then expand on her experiences in literature and the theatre. **Jim Ring** is a journalist, film maker and sailor who has written about his love for Ransome. He will give his personal view on Ransome as a writer and Ransome's aesthetic. **Jon Sparks** is a writer and photographer and author of *Arthur Ransome's Lake District*. He will talk on how Ransome influenced him and the adventures he had in tracking down and photographing the actual locations Ransome used in his books. **Robert Twigger**, author and travel writer, will talk about his recent book, *36 Islands*, inspired by the *S&A* books and his experiences in visiting the hidden wonders of the 36 islands found amongst the Lake District's lakes, waters and meres, including Wild Cat Island.

As ever, TARS members have put themselves forward. **Rachel Chalmers**, microbiologist and public health specialist, will talk on health, hygiene and happiness in the 12 books including revealing a new role for Sinbad! **Kirsty Nichol Findlay** has been researching modernism and will talk on Ransome and the avant-garde and the weekend opens with **Paul Crisp** talking about Aunts and Great Aunts in literature – well, we couldn't come to Harrogate and not mention our own GA! And our President **John Sergeant** has agreed to give the after-dinner talk at our Gala meal. He will talk about his favourite character, Captain Flint, and muse upon the similarities between Ransome's career and his own as a journalist and war correspondent.

**Please note, the hotel requires guest details and payment well in advance, it would be really helpful if you could register for the weekend and preferably make full payment by the end of February.**

The booking form can be found elsewhere in *Signals* or on the TARS website.