

Comely Bank Publishing – a lesson in cooperation

An Edinburgh man who set up his own publishing house three years ago is celebrating the acquisition of three more novelists to his stable of authors.

Gordon Lawrie set up Comely Bank Publishing, a writers' co-operative that helps authors self-publish their works, after writing his own book, *Four Old Geezers and a Valkyrie*, which was published in 2012. The book has gone on to be one of the top ten most-borrowed books in Midlothian Libraries, last year's 'Library Of The Year' in the Bookseller Industry Awards.

Gordon set up the publishing house to give Scottish writers additional options for self-publishing and for writers to share their experiences and help each other. Comely Bank Publishing is a publishing co-operative that creates opportunities for Scottish authors to publish works of interest using 21st century publishing options, including e-books and print on demand.

Currently, the co-operative concentrates on fiction, including short fiction, although it is open to other work as well. Comely Bank Publishing does not seek to make profits out of its authors, but looks to form a group of authors who help each other develop and, as a result, it can afford to be open-minded about what it publishes.

Gordon said: "I set up Comely Bank Publishing because I genuinely believe that too many authors are failing to have their works published. Publishers and publishing agents have become too cautious, grasping at poorer-quality work simply because it carries the name of an established author or a bankable name such as a celebrity.

“The future of literature can only be saved if bright new talent is nurtured as it used to be.

“Here at Comely Bank Publishing we want to share our experiences so that others who want to self-publish can benefit from what we have learned along the way.

“People shouldn’t mistake self-publishing for the old vanity publishing – books that are published through Comely Bank Publishing need to meet our standards. Just like any mainstream publisher, we look for good quality, readable books and we insist that books are properly edited and proof-read.”

Comely Bank Publishing has published three books so far – Gordon’s *Four Old Geezers* and *A Valkyrie*, a light-hearted comedic tale of what happens when four old blokes decide to try to crack the music business.

TD Burke’s *The Man from Outremer* is a swashbuckling tale, set largely in Scotland at the time of the early Scottish Wars of Independence around 1300 AD.

Katie and the Deelans by Emma Baird is the story of Katie, an ordinary teenager who goes to the worst school in the country. Life, however, takes a turn for the extraordinary when Katie and her friends take up magic lessons.

A fourth book, Jane Tulloch’s *Our Best Attention*, is set in a fictional Edinburgh department store and is due to be released in January 2016

In addition, three more books are in the 2016 pipeline – Roland Tye’s *Weekender* which blends together the experiences of multiple characters over one weekend in the capital, and two follow-up novels, TD Burke’s *Scourge of the Vikings*, set in 9th Century Europe and *Two Slices of Carrot Cake*, Emma Baird’s second young adult novel.

Gordon added: “We would welcome further submissions from local

authors as we are keen to expand the Comely Bank Publishing offering. We want people to view Comely Bank Publishing as THE place to find good quality fiction from up and coming writers.

“In addition, we also offer a synopsis service. Many people feel they have a book in them, but getting started is really difficult. We offer a service where we will read and review your synopsis and a first chapter if you have one of up to 4,000 words and give you feedback. All we ask is that you buy one of our books in return.”

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Submitted by [Gordon Lawrie](#)