

Wigtown Book Festival 2020 – on until 4 October

One of the real benefits of the pandemic is that every event – and perhaps even those you have never been to before – is online.

So this week, take yourself to Wigtown for the book festival and immerse yourself in kirkyard ghosts, a bit of witchcraft and fine whisky.

The Ghosts of Wigtown is a specially commissioned short story by leading Scottish writer, Karen Campbell. It will be read online by Kate Dickie who is an award-winning stage and screen actress and who grew up in Wigtown.



FREE PICTURE: Wigtown Book Festival “Spirit of Wigtown” Karen Campbell is pictured in Wigtown Parish Church kirkyard. This year’s Wigtown Book Festival is mostly online and runs until Sunday Photography for Wigtown Book Festival Company from: Colin Hattersley Photography – www.colinhattersley.com –

The book festival has regularly collaborated with local business such as the 203-year-old Bladnoch Distillery. This year there is an online whisky tasting with a miniature posted out to you before the event. The live sampling will then be streamed online and led by master distiller Dr Nick Savage

Every year the festival organises The Kist, a specially curated market, which showcases more than two dozen artisan food and drink producers and artists and craft makers from the area. This is also online with video tours of studios and premises and the chance to buy from the producers.

Another event you may like to try is a session discussing *A Spell in the Country* which is a guide to witchcraft with a few spells to try at home. Dr Alice Tarbuck an academic teacher and practising witch will talk about her new book

She believes that interest in the magical is very much on the increase right now and said: "In times of turmoil people often turn to the occult. I have certainly found that interest in witchcraft is on the increase, as well as its connection to stewardship of the environment.

"This is a book for people who are interested in gentleness and kindness, and for people who are interested in becoming a witch, think they may already be one or who know they are a witch and want to learn more."



Wigtown Book Festival "Spirit of Wigtown" Artists Julie Townson (left) and Emily Nash are pictured at Bladnoch Distillery, Wigtown. Photography for Wigtown Book Festival Company from: Colin Hattersley Photography – www.colinhattersley.com

Wigtown itself will also be a star of the festival. Sound artist Stuart McLean has recorded an hour-long walk around Wigtown that aims to bring the town alive wherever the listener is. The recording will be released on Wigtown's website on Saturday 26 September and the festival will also be tweeting individual sound throughout the week.

Adrian Turpin, Wigtown Book Festival artistic director, said: "There have been pros as well as cons in being forced to go online by the pandemic. While we can't welcome the world to Wigtown, we can share Wigtown – its spirit and its magic – with the world.

"And we've tried to find some innovative ways of doing that – so hopefully people will want to come here themselves next year."

- This year's Wigtown Book Festival runs from 24 September

to 4 October. Events are free but donations are requested as part of a £20,000 fundraising drive to assure its future.

- For full details see www.wigtownbookfestival.com



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