

Author William Blyghton.

Stories told with sensitivity

Do you ever feel there are not enough books that older readers want to read? Suffolk author William Blyghton's trilogy may be the answer.

Rachel Banham asks the questions.

Q. Please could you tell me your inspiration for your books?

A. In 2011, my wife died. I nursed her through the last 18 months of her life and she died at home. My first book, *The House by the Marsh*, was written in response to the madness of grief, the sense of loss and loneliness and then the recovery of love – all set in a beloved Suffolk, by the marshes, the shingle beach and the sea, with sea gulls squawking.

I then realised that this first book was going to be part of something more extensive, and this became *The Suffolk Trilogy* – the second book, just launched, *Abraham Soar*, and the third, being published later this year, *Noah: An Old Fool*. The theme running through each of these books is 'the later years', what it is to live and love in the later years of our lives, with loneliness and tenderness, and how to live in troubled times – for I believe we live in such times.

Q. How did you choose your pen name for these books?

A. My given name is David Cadman, and William Blyghton is my pen name - my middle name and the maiden name of my great grandmother, Rhoda Blyghton. Creating an author for the books enabled me to observe the story, and open up my imagination to possibilities beyond myself.

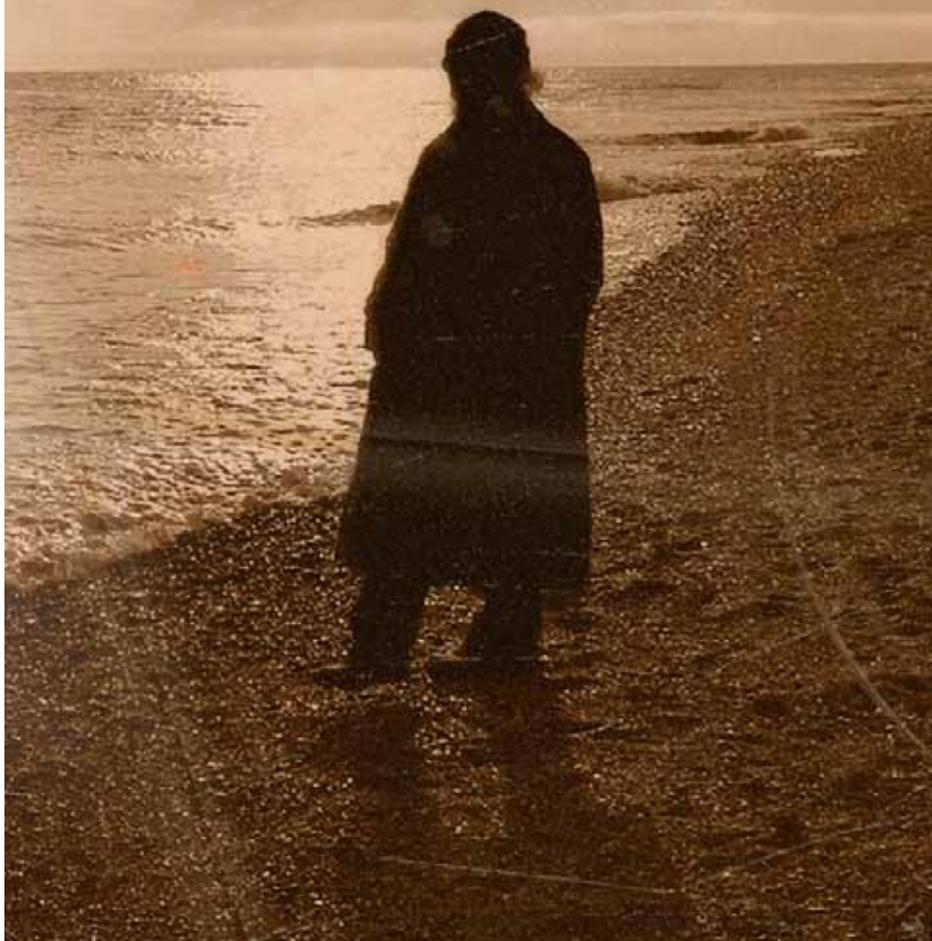
Q. What is your process for writing?

A. I start with a character and a location - the coast of Suffolk - and a general sense of what the story will be about. From there, I find that the characters shape the story for themselves. It's like living with them and not quite knowing what they will do.

Then it's just hard work! Day after day, week after week, month after month. And I have two people who guide me, my publisher, Lorna Howarth and my writing coach, Liz Ferretti, who tells me straight!

Q. How do you feel about the feedback to your books so far?

ABRAHAM SOAR



Abraham Soar, William Blyghton's second book in his Suffolk trilogy.

A. The positive has been very encouraging, where people have liked the characters and wanted to spend time with them, and have liked the descriptions of place, particularly those that know and love Suffolk as I do. Some who have themselves suffered loss, have said that they found *The House by the Marsh* to be a comfort, and I like that.

Q. How long have you lived in Suffolk and how important has the county been to your writing?

A. I was born and lived for many years across the border in Essex. But I first came to Suffolk 40 years

ago when my wife and I brought our children to Aldeburgh for holidays, renting a house on Crag Path. Fifteen years ago, we bought a small flat on the fourth floor of another house on Crag Path, overlooking the sea. It was a bolt-hole. Then 10 years ago, a couple of years before my wife died, we came to live in Aldeburgh full time. Now I don't want to be anywhere else.

Q. Do you have any favourite places in the county?

A. Halesworth for the wholefood shop; the tea rooms at Dunwich; the view over the marshes towards Iken at Snape; Woodbridge for shopping; the Aldeburgh Café;

the wooden houses at Sandy Bar at Thorpeness, and especially the River Alde down to Orford and up to Iken past Little Japan when I am on board my boat, Springtide. And my garden!

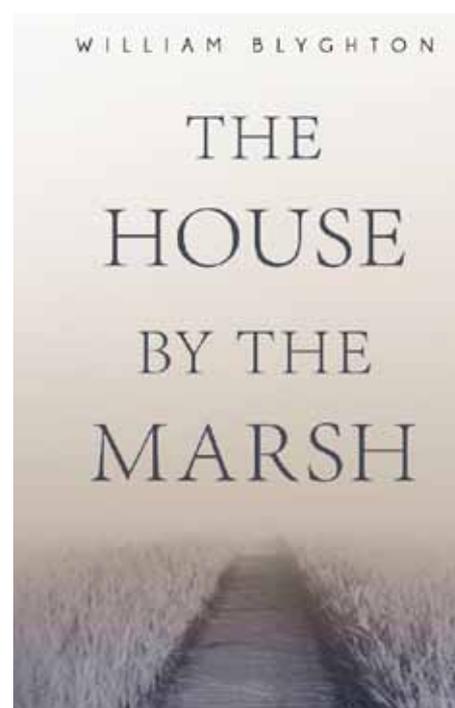
Q. Describe your stories for those yet to read them.

A. Tales of love and what it is to be in your later years; the fears and delights of that time and a search for what it means to 'be', to be fully alive amidst the troubles of the ordinary life.

Q. What did you do before you started writing?

A. For most of my life I earned a living as a consultant, and as a part-time academic, in the field of economics. From the age of 50, I began to search for meaning in my life, and read widely in the fields of Buddhism, the Grail Quest, and the teachings of all the great philosophical and religious traditions, including our own Celtic tradition. I also returned to my birthright Quakerism and, using my given name of David Cadman, wrote a book called *Holiness in the Everyday*. 

See more on:
williamblyghton.com



The cover of *The House By The Marsh*.