

STORIES TO TELL

We meet up with William Blyghton, author of The Suffolk Trilogy, to find out about his inspirations and local loves

What inspired The Suffolk Trilogy?

The trilogy began with my writing *The House by the Marsh*, but when I had finished that book I realised that there were other things that I wanted to say about loss, loneliness and love in our later years. Hence *Abraham Soar*, which is a love story, and *Noah: An Old Fool*, which is a much darker story about living in troubled times. All three are set in coastal Suffolk, especially in and around Aldeburgh and Thorpeness. There are common themes that connect the three stories – and there is always a cat.

What themes can we expect?

There are three themes: loss, loneliness and love in our later years. Love is there because, for me, it is the breath of life and sorrow.

The House by the Marsh is already out. How has it been received?

I have been surprised, but delighted, at the extent to which *The House by the Marsh* has met a need for stories written for those who are 60 plus. Not everyone has liked it, and there are faults in what was, after all, my first novel, but it has been well received, especially by those who have had to come to terms with loss and loneliness and, perhaps, those who have found love again. There is something very special about the quality of love when it comes late.

Abraham Soar is out this month.

What can you tell us about it?

Abraham Soar is a love story. And I create first Abraham and then Bryony to explore what it is to love and be loved. But characters do not always do what the author wants. And then what happens?

How long have these books taken you to write?

By the time *Noah: An Old Fool* is published, later this year, the trilogy will have taken almost five years to write. It is only in the last few months that I have been working with my PR agent Sara Green to make the work known in Suffolk. Before meeting Sara, I didn't know how to do that. That may be why it looks as if it has happened suddenly.

What does Suffolk mean to you?

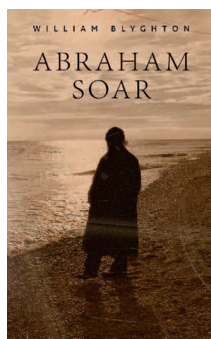
Living in coastal Suffolk is an inspiration for me and for these books, and this has increasingly become so. The marshes, the shingle beach, the river and the sea, and the vast dome of a Suffolk sky. I don't want to be anywhere else.

What's next?

Two projects: the first is an exploration of the meaning of love in our lives; the second is a sequel to *The House by the Marsh* told in the voice of one of its characters, Mary, exploring how it may be that, in troubled times, our survival will depend on learning to live and care for each other in a world led by women. **LB**

Favourites

- PLACE:** The River Alde on board my old launch, Springtide
- TO SHOP:** Woodbridge and Halesworth
- TO EAT:** The Aldeburgh Cafe
- DRINK:** Tea at tea time, with shortbread
- HIDDEN GEM:** My garden



Find out more by visiting williamblyghton.com