

STEPHANIE
WOLFE
MURRAY





STEPHANIE
WOLFE
MURRAY

A Life in Books





You radiated warmth, love, beauty, fairness and fun.

ADRIAN GELL

Granny was great. She had a life that we will all remember.

LUCA WOLFE MURRAY

The most amazing person I've ever met

JUDE ZIETARA

She'll be organising everybody now in heaven.

PETE MORGAN

There will never be anyone like her.

TOBY GOUGH

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Designed by James Hutcheson

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FOREWORD
Alexander McCall Smith



As we go through life, most of us meet one or two people who make a particular impression, who strike us as being specially gifted in one way or other. We remember the school friends who were egregiously good at some subject, the colleagues who had a talent for handling people, the friend who had a fine tenor voice or an ability to do something that we would have loved to be able to do ourselves. And then there are those rare people who are touched by a quality that far outshines these ordinary distinctions. They are few and far between and they stand out in our lives in an unmistakable and utterly memorable way.

Stephanie Wolfe Murray was, for many people living in Scotland during the last four decades, just such a person. Those who had dealings with her in the world of publishing were left in no doubt that here was a person touched by something that we should not hesitate to call greatness. And now that she has left us, the length and depth and breadth of that greatness has become apparent. That is so often the case, and the regret that such a realisation brings seems unavoidable. We often sense a person's worth only when we sit down, much later, to assess a life that has run its course.

This small collection is a tribute that will enable those who knew Stephanie to reflect further on the extraordinary

talents of personality and literary judgement that made her the much-loved standard bearer of Scottish publishing for so long. Her achievement in inspiring and nurturing a publishing renaissance is more than a footnote in the cultural history of the nation. It is a full and glowing chapter in its own right. Her talent for friendship and for bringing joy and laughter into the lives of those who knew her is a source of further marvel – and gratitude. In bringing together this collection, her son, Rupert, and her friend and collaborator, Jim Hutcheson, allow us to contemplate once more, with the pleasure of recollection, the bright comet that Stephanie's life was in the skies of so many.

PREFACE
Why this book?



THIS LITTLE BOOK was done in true Stephanie style – at the last minute, in a desperate hurry, with no money but endless faith that it would, as if by magic, get made in time. It came about a few weeks after her untimely death on the 24th of June 2017.

Soon after the funeral, Nick Barley of the Edinburgh Book Festival contacted us and said they wanted to organise an event to celebrate Stephanie and it seemed like a good idea to bring out a little book at the same time. I put it together with Jim Hutcheson, who as an old friend, designed many beautiful books with my mother. We both worked voluntarily and we raised the money for printing it by crowdfunding. Any profit will go to her three favourite charities: Edinburgh Direct Aid, the John Muir Trust and Compassion in World Farming. Thanks to everyone who contributed.

The Edinburgh Book Festival event is an opportunity to hear from authors, reflecting on the life of Stephanie Wolfe Murray. This book will bring together comments from old friends, neighbours and people who worked with her. Some of the material is from an article on my blog in which I asked people who knew her to share their anecdotes. We got over 25 tributes, some of which are brilliant, and they made me realise what a powerful impact she had on so many people. The other

material was written especially for this book.

My mother always told us that she loved us very much and encouraged us to believe in ourselves and our ideas. My brothers Kim, Gavin and Magnus, and I, were always welcomed home with open arms. She did the same thing with authors and also with lost souls who needed a shelter from the storm. Our homes were open to anyone who needed one. When we lived in the country we never had a front door key.

She put all her energy into helping other people but she didn't write much herself. She didn't have a particularly good opinion of herself; there was a lack of confidence based on, I think, the fact that she didn't go to university. She would blame herself every time one of us messed up, and the older she got the more outraged she became at all the injustice in the world. She signed every petition and seemed to support every charity under the sun – and without her support I never would have been able to succeed in charity work.

Monica Wolfe Murray, my sister-in-law, wrote a wonderful poem about Stephanie. It was read out at the funeral and is on her blog. Here is an extract from Monica's intro:

A few months back she told me she couldn't possibly write a book.

'Not even an autobiography?' I asked.

'Oooh!' she cried. 'I wouldn't have the faintest clue what to say, where to start...'

Most of the material in this little book speaks for itself but the next piece would benefit from an introduction: it is a letter from my mother to the late Scottish poet Alastair Reid. I stumbled across it when sorting through her papers and, in some ways, it says a lot about her. It was written in a hurry, in a café, and shows the loving and personal way that she communicated with her authors. It shows her eye for detail, her love of nature and her quirky, adventurous spirit.

It also offers a glimpse into the freedom she gave us as we were growing up. I feel so privileged to have been allowed to travel alone from the age of nine and to have done so before the era of helicopter parenting.

In the letter she described meeting her three sons in Majorca. We were teenagers at the time and had made our way alone across France and Spain with very little money, no language skills and only one sleeping bag.

It was a crazy trip which involved sleeping on trains and in bus stations, eating bread and cheese, and avoiding muggers in Valencia. Perhaps it gave me the courage to spend much of my life on the road, travelling into the unknown, always knowing that things would work out, that I'd find a bed, and a job, and that mother would always be waiting for me at home.

I hope you enjoy this eclectic collection of memories. It came about in a spontaneous manner and that was very much her way. The material just came pouring in and I just edited it and put it into a flowing order.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Rupert', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Rupert Wolfe Murray
Scotland, August 2017



LETTER TO ALASTAIR REID
Stephanie Wolfe Murray

Dearest Alastair,

It's difficult to know where to begin when I have thought for so long you knew what was going on in my life. But since nearly two weeks have passed (or maybe more) since we spoke I feel I should write anyway even if I don't say much.

It's lovely that you are coming here for Christmas. Come and stay whenever you want and for as long as you like. We would all love it.

I don't know where to start. Are you sending me your Scottish New Yorker stories? Or do you want to wait till you get here? If you have doubts about such a project perhaps we should think about doing stories drawn from the places you have lived around the world. It would reflect your life better and if the buried treasure story became the one from Scotland it would tell the story even more. Do think about this.*

Spain – Majorca. It's difficult to say thank you after so long but of course I do. I can still see it so clearly – the open pomegranates tempting me out of the door, all the almonds – God there were a lot; the well (where Kim lost his toothbrush!) and that place for washing clothes – I loved that with my back burning in the sun, and the shower. That was wonderful! And the little wood where we hung two hammocks and the view of the other side of that wood. We all got lost going there.

Maybe the children have already told you. Kim, Rupert and Gavin got there first and were sitting gambling with beans like cowboys when Mooner and I arrived a day and a half later after staggering through prickly terraces for hours. Suddenly I saw a little door saying JASPER REID, how thankful we were. I had already left our suitcases and my high heeled shoes behind some stone walls which took most of the next day to find. Anyway, it was wonderful but too short. I was there for less than a week but strangely that does not detract from the strong image I still have of it. We were there for the fiesta by the way.

I had better go now and do an hour's work before I go home. I'm working very hard now, I think it's because all my children have left home except Mooner. Gavin is at boarding school and the others at university so life is a little easier. It would be awful now if I didn't work and I hate to think of how women must feel when their children leave them and their houses are empty and they find themselves with time on their hands. But then there is always the garden! And reading, but we grow so accustomed to having responsibilities.

This letter is longer than I had planned. I'm going now.

With fondest love,

Stephanie
Stephanie

**The book that emerged from this correspondence was called *Whereabouts: Notes on Being a Foreigner*.*

CHILDHOOD MEMORIES *Virginia Johnson*

Stephanie and I rarely saw each other in the early years, we were kept apart somehow. I don't think the intention was to split us up but that's what our mother did, it was just the way she lived her life. There were three years between us which is quite a lot when you are that age.

After the war and after our father was killed, our mother married very briefly an extremely nice New Zealand person who Stephanie knew well. But I never really knew him, I don't even remember what he looked like.

We had lovely holidays abroad with mother and Harry Greer, our step-father. We used to travel around in a van because there was not much money after the war. We had blow-up Lilo chairs in the back of the van. One had a leak in it and because I was older I always had to sit on it and was forever having to blow it up. We used to go all over Europe, with very little money.

When I was about fourteen I went to a boarding school called Overstone, near Northampton. Stephanie came there later. She was quite naughty but in the nicest possible way, and was very popular. She wasn't very academic. I absolutely loathed all my schools but Stephanie thoroughly enjoyed them.

I left school at 16 and went to Paris, came back home, went to art school and got married very young, at 19. Stephanie went to Florence and stayed there for quite a long time, as somebody's secretary, and she had the most wonderful time.

She shared a flat with somebody called Jenny Wontner

whose father owned the Savoy Hotel, which is where they had the flat. It had a small balcony, so if anyone like our mother turned up the boys would have to dive out onto the balcony – people like Patrick Lichfield.

Stephanie then met Gus. But mother wasn't keen because Gus had no money and she had had lots of boyfriends with lots of money. Every mother in those days wanted their daughter to marry someone rich.

Stephanie went off to New York. Mother went after her and I had to come along too. I got double pneumonia while I was out there. Mother was in such a state she was going to jump off a balcony and we had to pull her back.

The sister of Gus's stepmother lived at Nostell Priory, where they got married. A wonderful wedding, and off they went.

FIRST EULOGY *Magnus Wolfe Murray*

When I was young you told me stories of people who chased whale-hunting ships on speedboats. Placing their own lives between the killer boat and the living beings.

I was still trying to figure out who, and what, I was.

I never let you know how cool your stories were, how much I wanted to be out there with that ocean rescue mission.

Instead, I left school and went to skateparks in Scotland, Spain, California...

You kept it up. You talked about our privilege, our obligation to use it to challenge injustice, to protect our earth.

People and beings less fortunate. To change the world!

And so... a few years later, now with a few surfing scars to add to the skateboarding mishaps, I found myself in a Romanian asylum where children were left to die. And there, I felt like a shield – between their fragile lives and a crazy, unjust world.

From there to wars in Bosnia, Somalia, Liberia I've carried on. I've never wanted to be, or do, anything else since. It feels like, in a way, I am your living legacy.

You know how proud I am to think how much you have shaped my life? A whirlwind, a chain reaction, that started with You! With your belief that life is made of hope and possibilities to craft a better world.

This was one of your many gifts. One I hope to carry forward – and pass on to my children.

And I'm so glad you've been such a major part of our little family. Monica knows so much of us and wrote up this moment for today, one of so many we spent together.

Go well Mama – I still feel you all around and keep thinking of so many things we have to share.

This eulogy was read out at Stephanie's funeral, in Peebles, on the 5th of July 2017

THE SIXTIES *Flora Fraser*

The approach to Braulen, a lodge in Glen Strathfarrar, Inverness-shire, was through a gate at Struy known to us as

the Heather Curtain. Our home was an island in the river Beauuly ten miles east. Five miles west of the gate, along an increasingly dilapidated tarmac road, lay the Wolfe Murrays.

Nowhere in the district was as vital, as creative and as close to the bone as life with Stephanie and Gus at Braulen. She was a funny, brave English girl who had no time for anything sentimental or Romantic Scotland, but had married Gus and come north to live in this remote and beautiful setting, so he could write. Gus had written a brilliant book, *The End of Something Nice*. We were in awe, too, of his ability to climb trees, play superb tennis, fish and pull alarmed faces.

Stephanie, whom Gus called 'Gel', short for 'Angel', was luminously beautiful with carved cheekbones and doe eyes. Those eyes could snap ferociously, when talk around the kitchen table settled on some individual whose character offended her, or when Kim or Rupert had, according to her strict code of manners, misbehaved. Money was scarce, and it was key, for example, not to drink the Ribena at the sink, which was: 'for VISITORS only'.

Rupert, even when young, had noticeable wanderlust. Though it was prohibited, he disappeared often for hours at a time. Each time the boys transgressed, Stephanie administered hot justice. But she took pains also to explain to them the reasoning behind both prohibitions and punishments.

Though Kim and Rupert – and, later, Gavin and Moona – may not have been grateful for all their mother's homilies, they have grown up, all four, to be very responsible adults with finely tuned and imaginative social consciences. Before ever Stephanie entered the world of publishing and developed an

eye for quality in literature, she burnished her children with loving care at Braulen. The house may have been not entirely free of dust, but it was an artistic home, under Stephanie's and Gus's guiding hands. I remember, for instance, Kim, when young, producing, for my mother's birthday, a fine present – antlers, decked with rowan berries – which she had always on her bedroom mantelpiece.

My sisters and brother and I stayed often at Braulen, returning with Gus and Stephanie after dinner on The Island, staying on after the Sunday picnics when the Wolfe Murrays hosted us and my uncle and aunt and our cousins. We used to cry, 'Madgy Machree', as Stephanie was driving a carload of us at top speed, a spoof Celtic alias that suited our witchy driver.

After Stephanie and Gus left Braulen and headed South, the Glen was never as magical again. But family and friends at Glenternie, colleagues and authors at Canongate, and neighbours at Glen were in luck. I still remember Stephanie, in a holey jersey and dilapidated jeans, dazzling US publishing giant, Roger Strauss, at the North British Hotel.

Rupert, Gus, Kim, Gavin and Moona, thank you for giving me this opportunity to remember a friend dear to so many of my family and especially to Rebecca, Benjie, Natasha and me.

CANONGATE: THE BIRTH

Angus Wolfe Murray



I had just finished a novel that had taken forever to write and was feeling that there had to be more to this literary lark than creating the stuff – it was too damned difficult.

A new friend, Bob Shure, wandered into our lives. This happened occasionally. The wandering, I mean. We lived in the country in a big house only an hour from Edinburgh with hens and dogs and kids, the middle class cliché, you might say, except it wasn't, it was unpredictable and pretty much out of control.

Bob was American and ended up at our place. I can't remember why. I liked him at once. He was funny and responsible for a book, called *Twink*, which was a collection of dialogue sketches, as original as they were left of left field. We talked novels, like you might talk about torture, or mind abuse. He had written *Monk* about a young man who climbed up a tower at a university campus and started shooting people. Sounded terrible but it was great, certainly different. He couldn't get it published.

Late one night, well into the second bottle of vino, I said, "We'll start a publishing house." Bob said, "What are you going to publish?" I said, "*Monk*." He said, "I'm with you." Next morning I asked, "Do you remember what we agreed last night?" Bob said, "Best idea in years." I said, "What was that?" He said, "We're publishing *Monk*."

There were no fiction publishers in Scotland then, certainly not in Edinburgh. Stephanie thought it was a fun

idea. All three of us put in £2000 and Canongate was born. It took us two weeks to come up with a name. Some of the rejects make me cringe now, like Pistol Ink. Anyway, we found premises in Jeffrey Street going cheap because the council was talking of pulling down the houses and stuffing a new road in there, or some such craziness.

We put together a collection of Edgar Allen Poe's humorous stories (out of copyright) and I went on the road with that and *Monk* to flog copies to every bookshop in the land. Needless to say Poe paid for the petrol and *Monk* paid for a cheese-and-pickle sandwich.

My marriage was feeling like an earthquake in slow motion and my bank balance was hovering over zero. Bob went back to America. An intelligent, organised, strong-and-steady fellow, called Charles Wild, filled the gap and moved into the office. I disappeared to make some money and Stephanie took my place at Canongate.

We had been going a year. Most of my schemes came to nothing, except I had read a piece in a Scottish literary mag (now defunct) from an unknown writer's work in progress which I liked a lot. The writer's name was Alasdair Gray. I left a note on the desk for Stephanie. She followed it up.

I thought that she would last a month and then Canongate would do a Titanic. I could not have been more wrong. Her natural qualities, suppressed and degraded in a difficult marriage, blossomed. She took the mould, broke it, laughed like hell and built another into a far, far better shape.

"The girl done good," I told Bob when next in touch.

“Why are you surprised?” he asked.

“Well...”

“You’re a fool,” he said. “You were handling gold and you didn’t notice.”

LEARNING TO COOK *Tessa Wolfe Murray*

I met Stephanie on the eve of her wedding to my brother Angus.

She was twenty, I was eleven. I loved her straightaway.

From then on, I spent most of my boarding school holidays in their home. Never did she make me feel I was the cuckoo in their nest.

I played with the babies, fed them and changed nappies. Stephanie showed me the best way to love children and be a mother.

We learned to cook together.

It was the 1960s. Garlic, herbs, spices, wine and cream had arrived in Britain.

Len Deighton, the crime writer, wrote a weekly recipe in the *Sunday Times* illustrated with witty woodcut prints of the ingredients.

We started with oxtail stew then chicken paprika.

We became more adventurous; calf brains swimming in cream and spices. We didn’t tell Angus till after he’d eaten them. He ran out of the room.

Was that the moment he turned vegetarian?

Like everyone, I will miss her.

LIGHTNESS OF TOUCH *Elisa Segrave*

She was so generous it was like a trick, a sleight of hand. Such was her lightness of touch.

She had such a full and busy life yet stretched it even further, a sort of miracle. I recall her rushing upstairs to put an electric fire in my room when I unexpectedly stayed the night in London.

Once at Glenternie when young I looked after Sandra Tarnowska's baby Kai all day. I was at the end of my tether and when Stephanie came home she showed me how to place a grape on baby's high chair to distract him.

When my first book was published, a black comic diary about having breast cancer, she came to help with the launch. I didn't even realise till later how helpful she had been, she made it seem fun.

I so admire her for her achievements with Canongate which she took on with no experience.

I like to remember her just after the birth of Gavin her third boy, nursing him in bed at Glenternie. She seemed very happy.

I read *Jeremy Fisher* to Kim in French! Rupert was wandering round in nappies. He looked most like her. I never got to know Moona.

What an extraordinary person Stephanie was. I feel privileged to have known her. I am Tessa's oldest friend and so glad she introduced me when we were teenagers.

UNDER HER SPELL *Fee (Gabriella) Moss*

All around her people were helplessly in love!

Her magic only slightly dimmed when she was no longer young – but as for when she WAS young! Every kind of man – men of all ages – she couldn't help it – was simply enthralled.

And was there a single woman who didn't want somehow to be like her?

There were Stephanie clones all around her.

She had everyone under her spell, and drew everyone into her world. She, and Angus, the children, the homes, the endeavours. It was an amazing, incredible world. Innocent but at the same time seductive and as dangerous as quicksand.

Hers was an extraordinary power, a force of nature, and so much of it she put to wonderful use. She took on every challenge. Nothing she wasn't equal to!

And for a lovely woman who had known so much admiration, she bore alone-ness, ageing and, finally, illness with inspiring, unforgettable dignity, integrity and generosity of spirit.

Throughout her life she was enormously, stubbornly positive and brave. So in love with life! And it is so awful to have to understand that she is no longer living. How can the world be without her?

I shall miss her all my days – but so grateful I knew her. She was so generous with me. I was very young, and so much of what has mattered to me in my life is coloured by what she taught me – I only wish I had managed to hold on to more of it.

BELOVED STEPHANIE *Andrew Tarnowski*

Wife, mother, sister, friend to many, lover, beauty, mother-in-law, sister-in-law, organiser, cook, housewife, entrepreneur, helper, publisher, homeowner, home organiser, welcomer to all, family centre, true heart, loyal heart, generous heart, energetic thinker, woman of conscience and concern, activist, charity worker, woman of imagination, straight talker, charmer, quiet presence, always there for others, endlessly loving, endlessly giving, tireless centre of a loving, healthy and happy home, nurturer of growth, never about herself, always about others, always living to the full and giving to the full ... Bid your holy angels welcome her. And lead her home into paradise.

DRIVING BAREFOOT *William Boyd*

It is unusual to be familiar with a novel you are sent to review. Even more unusual, in the case of *Lanark*, was that I was also familiar with its publisher.

In the early summer of 1972 (aged 20), I was living alone in my parents' isolated house in the Scottish borders – about three miles from the town of Peebles. I was working as a kitchen porter in the Tontine Hotel in Peebles trying to earn some money to pay for a trip to Munich (where my German girlfriend lived).

Not owning a car or a bicycle, I used to hitchhike to and from work. I was quite often given a lift by a young

woman who drove a battered Land Rover (she often drove in bare feet, I noticed, a fact that added immeasurably to her unselfconscious, somewhat louche glamour). This was Stephanie Wolfe Murray, and she lived further up the valley in which my parents' house was situated.

In the course of our conversations during the various lifts she gave me, I must have told her about my dreams of becoming a writer. She told me in turn that she had just started up (or was in the process of starting up) a publishing house in Edinburgh, called Canongate.

I have never met or seen Stephanie Wolfe Murray since that summer of 1972 (I did get to Munich, though, in time for the Olympics and the Black September terrorist events), and I'm wholly convinced she has no memories at all of the Tontine Hotel's temporary kitchen porter to whom she was giving occasional lifts that summer, but for me it was a strange moment to see "Canongate Publishing" on the title page of *Lanark* and to realise the unlikely connection – and stranger now to think that *Lanark* was the book that put Canongate squarely and indelibly on the literary map.

SHELTER FROM THE STORM *Joseph Blatchley*

I first met Stephanie on Saturday the 15th of February 1975. I had just landed a job at the Edinburgh Repertory Theatre, and my brother Nick had suggested I ask the Wolfe Murrays to put me up for a few days. So, on that memorable Saturday

I turned up at Glenternie in my clapped-out Morris traveller, and stayed – not for a few days – but for three whole months!

I had – and have – never been welcomed so unconditionally by anyone in my whole life. I was being engulfed by a hurricane of confusion and misery at the time and here I found shelter from the raging storm; and Stephanie was at the very epicentre of that restorative calm. I can truly say that without her and Glenternie I might not have been able to see the light at the end of the tunnel. Of course there was also Stephanie's amazing family who were quite extraordinary in their welcome too: Angus, Kim, Rupert, Gavin and Moona (and not forgetting the dogs: Flora and her pups).

They all took me in without so much as a blink of an eye, as if I had been their long lost and dearest friend. My time there was like a rebirth and thanks to it I learned how to take a few tentative steps into the world again.

I learned so much it is difficult to list it all, but here goes: I learned how to cook and eat haggis, I learned how to put wet clothes on a washing line, (by the end of 3 months Stephanie said I was the only man she knew who could put washing on a line correctly!) I learned how to use an antique lawn-mower, I even learned how to remove the gearbox from a Morris Minor with a pickaxe! I learned how to play poker, (which I hated as I witnessed Stephanie and Angus turn from angels into devils!) and above all I learned how love can heal, how patience can replace fear and how to accept the love of a true 'mother' even when we are long out of our swaddling clothes.

One of my great regrets in life is that I never thanked her appropriately or repaid her for her overwhelming kindness.

How ungrateful we can be when we are too wrapped up in our own sorrows! But I can find comfort in the certain knowledge that Stephanie will have forgiven me, because giving was part of her very nature – and she gave without ever asking anything in return; it just flowed out of her. If I could, I would bless her days on this earth – but I suppose I will have to leave that to a higher authority.

Dear Angus, Kim, Rupert, Gavin and Moona, I know that you will be living in the shadow of incomprehensible pain and I know that there is nothing that I can do or say to make any of it disappear; all I can offer you are these few words from Aeschylus: “Even in our sleep, pain which we cannot forget, falls drop by drop upon the heart, until, in our despair, and against our will, comes wisdom through the awful grace of God.”

I send you all my fondest, fondest love.

Jo Blatchley (the old, bald, fat one; not the young, tall, slim one!)

NETTLE SOUP *Gardner Molloy*

I will never forget turning up one evening to find there was no food in the cupboards whatsoever, and her sending you all out to pick armfuls of nettles and then making a big pot of delicious soup literally out of nothing and feeding us all.

Total earth mother.

SHE WAS A WHIRLWIND *Michael Wigan*

She broke the mould in Scottish publishing and I remember well how her innovation, sheer go-and-get-it brio, just swept everyone away in her path. More than a breath of fresh air in rather staid Caledonian publishing, she was a whirlwind. Her charm turned scowling misogynist monosyllabic authors inside out, into grinning schoolboys.

In the early Canongate days she was a whirlwind, juggling four children, all sons, commuting from Glenternie in the Manor Valley south of Peebles, and running a full and busy home.

It seemed never to occur to her that something was not do-able. She could get friends, bystanders, or anyone within range, to do anything. If Stephanie said go and rob the bank we need money for lunch, you would unthinkingly proceed with the instruction thinking how sensible.

Using charm, humour, and mischievousness she got her way without ever seeming to have a firm idea of what it was in the first place. She drove at speed in a severely eroded car through the floor of which you could see the tarmac inches away whizzing below.

The children, three of whom were in their teens, sprawled around in the back like so many dogs, in fact along with dogs. For someone who promoted so many authors and handled so much literature it is amazing that she never seemed to read.

Canongate gave aspiring writers a voice. If fund-raising for the business was ever needed she could raise money

effortlessly – or so it seemed – knowing, along with the bohemian crowd, some industry leaders. She was often late and in a rush but no-one ever seemed to hold it against her.

I knew her and her family well for a short time when she was in her thirties and starting Canongate. She was firing on all cylinders at that time. Since then I never saw her so these memories are mid-Seventies.

CANONGATE: THE EARLY YEARS

Charles Wild

I met Stephanie when I joined Canongate in early 1974, shortly after its formation. Initially I was working with Angus in the small Jeffrey Street office, during the midwinter Miners' Strike which meant we had electricity for only three days a week. We sustained ourselves with baked potatoes from the Tempting Tattie shop across the road.

Angus soon moved on to other things, but with only two books published, Stephanie took the brave decision to continue with the enterprise. I worked with her for the next five years. It was a productive period and created a significant, if financially precarious, platform for what was to follow.

Within its first few years Canongate absorbed the Southside imprint, founded by Robin Lorimer, who had given me my initial training as an editor at Oliver & Boyd. The merger brought with it a valuable reciprocal arrangement with Calder & Boyars in London, whereby Southside's sales rep, Dave Morgan, sold books in Scotland, and Calder & Boyars'

reps sold Canongate and Southside books in England.

Lorimer was the first Chairman of the Scottish Publishers' Association (now Publishing Scotland), formed in 1974 by ten small companies with support from the Scottish Arts Council to collaborate on promotion and distribution of their work.

Southside had a small but impressive list which brought added context and substance to what was in the early days a somewhat random collection of titles.

Lorimer's vision was the revival of general publishing in Scotland (abandoned in the 1950s and 1960s) and he believed that books by Scotland-based authors should enjoy the same high editorial and production standards as those published in London or New York.

Stephanie warmly embraced these principles and showed a flair and sound intuition in her dealings with authors, designers, fellow publishers and many others who helped Canongate's progress. Her attendance at international book fairs was significant in raising Canongate's profile beyond the merely parochial.

Highlights of the early Canongate years included Antonia Fraser's anthology of *Scottish Love Poems* (launched at a chaotic party in the Richard Demarco Gallery round the corner in the Royal Mile), Jimmy Boyle's autobiography *A Sense of Freedom*, successful medical novels by Colin Douglas (*The Houseman's Tale*, etc), collections of poetry by Sorley Maclean, Alastair Reid, Andrew Greig, Valerie Gillies and others, and titles on current affairs including the Scottish oil boom and the story of the short-lived *Scottish Daily News*.

And in 1979 we were offered, and enthusiastically agreed to publish, Alasdair's Gray's landmark novel *Lanark*.

Working with Stephanie was at times chaotic, but above all enjoyable and rewarding. My time at Canongate remains one of the most vivid periods of my life and I remember her friendship and much kindness. After my departure in 1979 Stephanie somehow managed to sustain Canongate for another fifteen years before it was put on a more secure financial footing, and that is testimony to her great skill and determination.

GETTING *LANARK* PUBLISHED *Alasdair Gray*

When eighteen I began my first novel, and turned it into a long job by making it a Scottish epic. It was half-finished in 1970 when Frances Head, a fine English literary agent, interested three London publishers in it; but as it would be very long, eccentric, and by an unknown author, they thought it might be an expensive flop unless split up into two books which they offered to publish separately. I refused to do so, but gladly accepted Quartet Books offer of £90 for the right to accept or refuse the whole book on completion. I needed money, and £90 in 1970 was at least the equivalent of £500 today.

I was now so sure of my first chapters that I sent them to Bob Tate, editor of *Scottish International*, then Scotland's only high quality literary magazine, which published them. Some weeks later Angus Wolfe Murray phoned me to say he

had recently started Canongate, a Scottish publishing house, which would like to publish *Lanark* when it was finished. I was not sorry to tell him a London publishing house now had a first claim to it. Till the 1840s Scotland was the main centre of British publishing, but not after Collins, Constable and other big presses moved their headquarters to London a century later.

When I finished *Lanark* in 1979 Quartet Books turned it down unless I agreed to the separate publication of each half, which I again refused. Meanwhile Frances Head had died of lung cancer. Many weeks passed before I overcame my depression enough to send the *Lanark* typescript to Canongate, not realizing Angus Wolfe Murray had left Stephanie in charge, who was now in partnership with Charles Wild.

What seemed like many months passed before I received a typed letter from Charles regretting the delay, saying he had so far read only half of *Lanark*, but Canongate would certainly publish it. In the letter's lower margin Charles wrote that my book had renewed his faith in publishing, which had languished after Canongate published Sorley MacLean's collected poems. Two more years passed, a delay that was mostly welcome because it allowed me to draw an elaborate jacket for the book and five inner title pages. And I now met Stephanie.

We were in agreement from the start. I wanted the book set in a highly conservative Times Roman type, to compensate for the novel's four sections being in the order 4, 3, 1, 2. I wanted new speeches in the text NOT indented from the left

margins, like the first lines of paragraphs. To my eye these broke up each paragraph's visual unity, which is important to me. As other novels do not do so Stephanie feared readers would find this distracting. But when an experimental page was typeset as I wished, she saw nothing distracting about it.

After that she agreed with all my proposals. I told her I planned to write six books, each perfect of its kind: a novel (completed), a short story collection (half-written), a book of poems, one of plays, another of essays, a last one of my pictures. We both wished Canongate to publish all of them, and before *Lanark* was published in 1981, I signed a contract for my second book, *Unlikely Stories Mostly*.

What sunk the plan to have Canongate publish all my books was Stephanie's lack of money. I had easy part-time work as writer-in-residence at Glasgow University when completing the stories. The last of these unexpectedly expanded into a second novel, 1982 *Janine*. This was half finished when the university job ended, so I sent the start to Canongate, asking for £1000 to buy time to complete it. Stephanie sought the £1000 advance from a USA publisher to whom she offered the American rights, but that firm turned the offer down. Since Stephanie could not afford to pay that amount my work on the book stopped until Cape of London offered this advance, producing my second novel in 1984. The year before *Unlikely Stories Mostly* had been published by Canongate as successfully as *Lanark*.

A Scottish newspaper story – not authorized by Stephanie – said I had taken my writings to London for more money as soon as Canongate, that small Edinburgh publisher

had made them famous. This was not quite true. From *The Fall of Kelvin Walker* in 1985 to *Every Short Story* in 2012, I gave Canongate five books and London publishers the same number. I needed the London money because it was paid to me steadily. Often Canongate could not pay royalties I was due. Stephanie explained that if I was paid her firm would go bankrupt because it had not enough money to pay the printers. I am not sure if there were two or three threatened bankruptcies before she resigned Canongate to Jamie Byng in the 1990's. They kept being averted by her getting a new partner, so I knew I would be paid what I was owed eventually. On one occasion when I was discussing a new book with such a partner he said, "By the way, we have a cheque for you. Of course you are the last to be paid." I said, "Of course!"

This explains the bumpy but lasting friendship I had with Stephanie. I have good reason to be grateful to her and so has Scottish publishing, now in a much healthier state than it was when Canongate was founded. Less than two months ago I enjoyed a lunch with Stephanie and Angus who were living together again, and also her son Rupert. Though ill with cancer she seemed her usual self. Her death came as a shock. She has done many people a lot of good.

AN INSTINCTIVE PUBLISHER

Jenny Brown

Stephanie was an inspiration from the moment I first met her in the early 1980s. A visionary editor in the days when Scottish publishers were few and far between, introducing new voices like those of Alasdair Gray, Jimmy Boyle, and Charles Palliser, publishing landmark volumes like Antonia Fraser's *Scottish Love Poems* and republishing classics like *Sunset Song*.

An instinctive publisher with a keen eye for design. A passionate human with a strong sense of social responsibility and a gift for friendship. A woman with a sense of adventure who loved the hills. A single mother of four boys. Capable and scatty. Individual. Stylish. And beautiful. Overseas publishers regularly fell head over heels for her at book fairs.

She still found time to be on the founding board of the Edinburgh Book Festival, and was generous with me as a rookie director, giving me a crash course into the minds (and pockets) of publishers.

At one Edinburgh Book Festival there was a friendly competition amongst senior publishers to see how many copies of their books they could hand sell to the public. The sales of London publishers Christopher Maclehose and André Deutsch were easily overtaken by the enterprising Stephanie who had lined up Alasdair Gray to draw pen portraits into every copy of *Lanark* that day.

One of our last meetings was at Belladrum Tartan Heart Festival two summers ago, near Inverness. Stephanie and I were on a panel talking about how to get published, and her grand-daughters were in the front row.

There she was, offering great advice to new writers, engaged in literature, in the festival and in life – and looking as groovy as ever.

MOSCOW BOOK FAIR *Judy Moir*

I'm so very sad to hear of Stephanie's passing. I was fortunate to have her as my first proper 'boss' in the early 1980s at the Scottish Publishers Association, and then again in the '90s when I edited for Canongate.

She inspired a generation of Scottish publishers and her generosity, dedication, creative flair, charisma and literary acumen were astonishing.

She discovered and championed so many fine writers: Alasdair Gray, Alastair Reid, Sorley Maclean, Charles Palliser; too many to list, and she knew how to nurture the design of beautiful looking books. She had wide tastes – natural history, poetry, biography, art, children's books and more.

And she was an incredibly brave publisher (Jimmy Boyle, Gorbachev's letters), far more concerned to publish 'important' books than to reap financial reward from them.

She initiated the Canongate Classics series (over a hundred titles went on to be published), so that key Scottish texts could be available in affordable paperback for Scottish schools and universities – also so that they could be appreciated by readers internationally (her charm and sales technique at international book fairs was extraordinary). She also started the Kelpies children's imprint.

She was helpful to other publishers, from the Salamander Press to Polygon and others; truly the guiding light in the renaissance of Scottish publishing a generation ago.

Post-publishing, that same intrepid spirit was transferred to her charitable work in eastern Europe.

Above all, she was a wonderful person.

Stephanie and I attended the Moscow Book Fair in 1983 (pre-glasnost) on behalf of Scottish publishers. The Publishers Association (PA) in England had invited us.

The Russians always had a fondness for Scotland, they adore Rabbin Burns and it rather suited the PA to have the Scottish Publishers Association on-board.

Not unusually, with so much else going on in her life, she was somewhat disorganised and hadn't packed sufficient clothing. I discovered this when we arrived at one of those huge hotels in Moscow, the Rossiya, where both of us delighted in having conversations by the bathroom sink with the water running so that no-one could hear what we said about the Soviet Union. As if our conversations were top secret! This was the Cold War era and there was much fear amongst westerners.

I was able to lend her a couple of skirts and shirts, but my shoes didn't fit her. First day of the book fair she was bedecked in fairly tatty trainers so our delightful translator, Natasha, arrived the following day with shoes for her to wear. At this time, the locals were desperate for western clothing (particularly brands like Levis and tights), so it was deliciously ironic that a local Muscovite was helping Stephanie in this way.

In charge of the Publishers Association at that time was a chap called Tony Read. Late one evening, Stephanie and I decided to visit him in his hotel – it was quite tough gaining entrance to this other hotel, but Stephanie has her ways and charmed the grim-faced officials to let us in.

On arrival at Tony's room we discovered his assistant, utterly hysterical, because Tony had done something to his knee. He was in excruciating pain and didn't want her to call a local doctor. Without a moment's hesitation, Stephanie inspected the knee and simply yanked it back into position. Tony screamed in pain and yet... she'd sorted him out. He was later very thankful.

We were at the book fair to sell translation rights of Scottish books to Russian publishers, and possibly to purchase licenses for Soviet books to be translated into English. But one of the books we'd sent over never arrived at our stand – this was *Unlikely Stories, Mostly* by Alasdair Gray. Tony asked if there was something about it which might have upset the local censors – indeed, we suddenly remembered there was a dog fornicating with a woman on the spine... so much for selling that one, then.

We did however end up signing multiple 'option agreements' at the end of the fair – at each half-hourly appointment that day we were required to down a shot of vodka with the local publisher when doing the signing. This went on all day and whereas I was rather the worse for wear, somehow Stephanie was okay.

The Russian publishers' hospitality was generous on the vodka front, but limited on the food front. They offered caviar

or ghastly, over-salted fish.

Trying now to recall which books were optioned is a bit difficult – a Scottish cookery book published by Canongate definitely; a collection of Scottish short stories, a book on Burns. There were many others – some of them Russian books for translation into English and I think this included a book of Armenian recipes which Stephanie may indeed have gone on to publish.

Few of the options came to anything (VAAP, the Russian copyright agency of that era, apparently liked to announce at the end of the fair that xxx options had been signed, hence a successful fair).

Stephanie was a superb ambassador for Scotland and Scottish books and charmed many publishers at that book fair.

We returned to the UK not by British Airways (as planned) but by train to Finland and a flight from Helsinki to London. During the book fair, which lasted about five days, a Korean plane had been shot down, creating diplomatic difficulties between Russia and the UK.

At a drinks reception at the British Embassy one evening, we were discreetly informed by smooth-toned British embassy staff (it was terribly cloak-and-dagger and rather exciting) that there were now no flights out of Moscow to London, and we'd have to take a train to Helsinki. Tickets had been purchased, everything arranged and nothing was to be said about it to any Russian publishers.

So, once the fair was finished, about 50 British publishers duly boarded a train in Moscow for the overnight journey to Finland – twelve hours or more. We were armed with caviar

sandwiches and bottles of vodka that had been gifted to us by local publishers and were all a bit nervous, tired, and in varying states of inebriation after the excruciating, i.e. vodka-sodden, final day of the fair.

Shortly after the train left Moscow, a huge battle-axe of a woman, terribly stern, came to check our passports and visas.

Stephanie couldn't find her visa and this was the only time, in my experience, that her legendary charm failed to work its magic. This massive, steely-eyed Russian official insisted that Stephanie empty her entire suitcase to look for it – this was in a carriage with bunks containing several other passengers.

Embarrassing and rather worrying. Stephanie kept her cool though, as the contents of her case were unveiled to all and sundry. The caviar sandwiches were there (caviar was made available throughout the fair, and she wasn't going to waste any of it!), very few clothes, many Russian books (but thankfully no Russian icons, which were expressly verboten), and lo and behold the visa was eventually found.

After that, we could all relax now that Stephanie (and the rest of us!) had managed to stay on the train leaving the Soviet Union. Much vodka was then consumed, songs sung and it was great fun.

Uptight English publishing folk who never usually let their hair down, were singing harmonies or adding rude words to songs for hours and hours. There was no food on the train, just the sandwiches and I could taste that damn caviar in my mouth for days afterwards.

Stephanie was great company always, never a dull moment, and I will miss her dearly.

WE RAN IN HARNESS TOGETHER

Tim Neat

She had one of the great names: Stephanie Wolfe Murray. Who can better that?

She was the most beautiful woman I ever looked upon: far more beautiful than the photos suggest she was.

She did wonderful things in the world – with her family, with Canongate, with writers and thinkers, with the broken and the dispossessed of the earth.

And, in the world's terms, how foolish she was! In my case, recognising and supporting my writing at a time when no one, at least anyone in authority, did.

In 1981 I took my ideas about a book – on meaning and symbolism in the art of Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Margaret Macdonald – to Stephanie, in Jeffrey Street, Edinburgh. I projected slides. We talked for hours. She was entranced and enchanting and committed herself to publication of a major hardback book, 'worthy of these artists and this revelatory approach'.

Such support at such a time was life-affirming and creatively crucial.

I was extremely busy and struggling on all fronts – trying to support a young family, fulfil the demands of a full-time teaching post, chair the Scottish Sculpture Trust whilst deeply immersed in making the unfunded documentary film HALLAIG, about the Gaelic poet Sorley MacLean.

Canongate had published MacLean's *Spring tide and Neap tide* in 1977, recently launched Alasdair Gray's ground-

breaking novel, *Lanark* – and now they would publish me.

Stephanie shared various interests, not least an enthusiasm for the culture of Scotland's Travelling people. In 1976 I had made a film *THE SUMMER WALKERS* about the Highland Travelling people, with Hamish Henderson, and Stephanie was developing plans to publish a ground-breaking series of books by the great oral storyteller Duncan Williamson with his American wife Dr Linda Williamson.

We never ate a restaurant meal but, for fifteen years ran in harness together, and I remember Stephanie saying something that no one else has ever said (or would dream of saying!): 'Tim, you are a man at the height of your powers, you must work – and I shall see your work published.'

She had a generosity of spirit, rare in our reductive times.

With pride she told me of her husband Angus's descent, from the Murray in whose arms General Wolfe died on the Heights of Abraham, in 1759. The young General, knowing he would die without issue, asked, with his last breath that his dear friend and second-in-command should take forward his name. James Murray thus became James Wolfe Murray, for all eternity.

Stephanie's sense of historical responsibility was balanced by a literary, artistic and personal commitment that embraced a willingness to risk all without fear.

Completion of my book, entitled *Part Seen, Part Imagined: Meaning and Symbolism in the Art of Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Margaret Macdonald*, advanced slowly because of my teaching and film-making, but Stephanie, never chided or lost faith.

Finally, with my film career in well-orchestrated ruin, the book came out in a rush in the spring of 1994.

I was angry; Stephanie had refused me the right to check the proofs! Why?

Because she knew Canongate was about to be declared bankrupt and if a week had been spent on proof-reading, the book would never have appeared! This was the Nelson touch! Here was heroism, action, the moment realised. I shall be ever grateful to Stephanie for her bold selflessness at that moment of extremis.

When Canongate was reconstituted, Stephanie ensured that my second book, *The Summer Walkers*, was also published, and it soon became one of a quintet of books on 20th century highland life.

After that our paths divided, but I was delighted in 2016, when my eleventh book, *The Day Of The Mountain* (a book of drawings) was launched at the Royal Scottish Academy to see her there at the launch. Her presence gave me the chance to publicly honour her and thank her for what she had done – for me, for Scotland, for human culture and mankind.

In the 1960's Hamish Henderson wrote: 'Scotland hates and fears its creative writers. Why is there here this conspiracy of the old against the young – which you get everywhere – but which with us is so blatantly tyrannical? It goes back to the fantastic theocratic tyranny of the 17th century and the attempt to divide the nation into a small, elect elite and the damned mass... But Christ died for all men and Scots literature arises out of the whole people.' Stephanie helped put that old barbarism to bed.

The cultural energies abroad in Scotland today owe much to her, and she embodied something that Henderson also observed – that greater political and cultural courage has often been shown by Scotland's women rather than their menfolk: 'the general picture is one of almost masochistic apathy and defeatism'.

He recognised these women were heirs to ancient Celtic traditions of thrawn assertiveness, whilst their menfolk, in tune with modern mores, continue to accept subordination – to feudal chieftains, kirk, party, state and property.

'The folkways of a millennium continue,' Henderson notes, 'passing an Act to abolish the heritable jurisdictions (of aristocrats, chiefs and lairds) does not mean that you get rid, automatically, of the mental attitudes involved, either on the victim's side, or on the side of the judges. Reading the accounts of some of the Clearances one gets an impression of the ritual of "pit and gallows" still in operation and the luckless clansman waiting to be topped by the chief's crochadair...'

Sixty years after those words were written, strong women dominate even more absolutely politics, broadcasting and culture across Scotland: unfortunately, very few of these new chieftains have the poetry of mind, the nurturing goodness, the creative flair of a Stephanie Wolfe Murray.

THE MENTOR *Jamie Byng*

Stephanie was beautiful, charismatic, kind and soulful. She was utterly selfless in her support of others.

She was an inspirational figure in my life, as she was for countless others, and not just because of what she taught me about publishing.

She was my first mentor, taking me under her gentle wings and teaching and encouraging me from the moment we met in November 1992.

I feel so fortunate that she came into my life when she did. It was a fortuitous first meeting that I have thought about on many occasions as from it stemmed so many important things and people in my life.

Canongate would not be doing what it is doing today if it wasn't for her.

WORDS ARE USELESS

Toby Gough

Walking up St Leonards bank to see Stephanie was always a heart-warming and enjoyable event. Like Arthur's Seat that looked onto her house we thought she would be with us for ever.

Trying to describe Stephanie you end up having to trace the story of your own life. She was my greatest inspiration.

I loved Stephanie as I love Jim Haynes as I loved Jan Fairley as I love Arthur's Seat as I love Carlton Hill as I love the Botanic, as I love her family as I love the sea as I love how the Edinburgh Festival used to be.

Stephanie was the wisdom, the kindness, the conscience, the guru, the spirit of Edinburgh. She was everything to me. She enthused, encouraged, supported every humanitarian,

artistic, endeavour we were ever mad enough to take on in every way. She was a champion of protecting precious human lives and supporting the forgotten, disenfranchised and neglected.

Going to see her was like going to a sacred wonderful secret magical place.

The walk to her house past the police station, past the carpet shop, to overlook the crags, the amazing landscape, walking past the dodgy gate with the overgrown bush, finding the secret place for the key, reading the ring of bright water poem on the wall, the spindly Giacometti sculpture, the room with the unmade up bunkbed, the spiral stairs, the smell of coffee, the shower room, and then there in the kitchen was Stephanie with her smile and hospitality and interested questions and her tobacco and paper rolling machines and envelopes and magazines and books everywhere.

Stories, advice, passion, laughter, compassion. With her you felt you could change the world.

And we tried.

We shared an office in Jeffrey street with Connect and Gavin's record shop which didn't open very often. I shook cans to collect money for Scottish European Aid on every street in Edinburgh. She was the reason Rocky and I spent two years working in refugee camps in Bosnia, Croatia, Slovenia doing theatre workshops and crazy puppet shows.

Stephanie was the reason we entered Sarajevo to make an opera with Professor Nigel Osborne.

Her son Moona welcomed me into Tuzla where we played American football as the shells dropped down around us.

Rupert, Kim Sobhano, Gavin became great friends, second family and drinking pals in starlit and rainy nights in the Botanics.

Stephanie in Edinburgh was the lifesource.

We all know what she did, who she was, and how we feel about her.

Words are useless.

We can try to achieve a glimmer of what she achieved or a shadow of what she dreamed of achieving but the reality is she was a saint, a force for good, unique and no matter what we say or do, her place in this world can never be filled. There will never be anyone like her.

Her smile, her laughter, her voice, her wit. Her phone number at St Leonards bank is the one phone number I can always remember.

Wouldn't it be great if one day we could all meet again? If we don't, well, meeting Stephanie and her wonderful family in this life was enough, remarkable joyful hilarious inspiring unforgettable and priceless.

A life so well lived, she created a wonderful crazy world-changing family and she set a great example for all of us.

So many memories, never to be forgotten.

Stephanie, forever in our hearts.

A THUNDERBOLT OF TALENT

Nigel Osborne

Stephanie changed the world, and saved and enhanced the lives of hundreds of thousands of people in the process. But this was not a selfish or ego-driven endeavour. Stephanie took us all with her.

She was at the epicentre of an extraordinary vortex of positive, compassionate “can-do” energy, a gentle hurricane of pragmatic ethics which she summoned from somewhere in the skies to hover over Edinburgh, drenching us, at times tossing us around like confetti, but blowing us towards dazzling sunshine.

In the early 1990’s Edinburgh was a special place to be. I was lucky to be caught up in Stephanie’s vortex. I can remember that in 1992/93 as the genocide unfolded in Bosnia, Edinburgh became, in Stephanie’s perfect storm, perhaps the most important centre for civil action in the UK.

Stephanie and her sons had founded Scottish European Aid, Denis Rutovitz and Jeanne Bell set up Edinburgh Direct Aid, Ricky Demarco had launched the campaign for the Sarajevo Obala Theatre and Gallery, Willie Macnair had set up Sarajevo-Edinburgh, and Susan Nickalls and I, supported by Henrietta Somervell had founded Scottish Action for Bosnia – and there were many, many others.

Our efforts benefited from an informed and engaged media; these were banquet years, when Magnus Linklater edited the *Scotsman*, and writers and broadcasters like Allan Little and Sheena McDonald, or Paul Harris at *Scotland on*

Sunday produced real, empathetic, tell-it-as-it-is journalism.

We were a mutually supportive, completely functional eco-system driven in large part by Stephanie's clean, eco-friendly energy. Humanitarian and human rights efforts in other centres were blighted by divisions and dysfunction. The unprocessed and unresolved emotions of the war spilled over and poisoned personal relationships and dissolved group cohesions.

But not in Edinburgh. Everyone remained loyal, trusting and supportive of one another. In the challenging meteorology of Stephanie's vortex, we picnicked amicably together under our umbrellas. Visiting Bosnian politicians and incoming refugees all commented how "together" our campaign appeared to be and how much at home they felt with us.

In some senses I didn't know Stephanie very well; in other ways I knew her very well indeed. I flatter myself by claiming that our lives rolled out to some extent in parallel. I wish I had known Stephanie and Angus better when they were founding Canongate. I think of myself, rightly or wrongly, as a creative artist and would have loved to be closer to something that certainly changed the world – at the very least the world of Scottish literature.

Later our synergy and synchronicity needed no words. When I would meet Stephanie at the most harrowing moments of the war in Bosnia, she would look at me with her beautiful "I'll-help-you-in-every-way-but-please-be-honest-with-me" eyes, and her eyes would say, "It's tough isn't it, Nigel, but let's keep going," and my eyes would reply, "Yes,

let's keep going – and it's much easier to keep going knowing that you are around, Stephanie.”

The exceptional nature of Stephanie's life could attract clichés. It would be possible to see her sad passing as the “end of an era”, an era which embraced dignity, altruism, courage, human service and bold imagination.

But that would be wrong. Although her generational travelling companions are crossing the thresholds of three and even four score years and ten, she has a brilliant youthful legacy.

The brightest of the bright of young people who fell under her spell carry her special energy: artists like Roxanna Pope, Toby Gough and Conrad Molleson. And of course there are her gifted sons and grandchildren. I do not know Kim and Rupert very well, but see from a short distance away the human grace, and the creative and spiritual authority with which they live their lives – in every way their mother's sons.

Magnus (Moona) has become one of the world's most skilled and effective aid workers. I occasionally bump into him in far-flung places and catch the exhilarating spin of the vortex.

Gavin has inherited the creativity, the pragmatism and indeed the versatility of his mother, multitasking as record producer, natural philosopher and film cameraman. I think of Gavin as a real friend, and am lucky to have worked with him making prize-winning films with Samir Mehanović, and to have travelled with him through some of Europe's most challenging landscapes.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn once wrote of the poet Sergei

Esenin “What a thunderbolt of talent the Creator must have hurled into that cottage, into the heart of that quick-tempered country boy for the shock of it to have opened his eyes to so much beauty”.

It makes me wonder what kind of thunderbolt was hurled into the heart of this well-mannered, well-brought-up would-be debutante to set her alight with the most powerful forces of nature, a fiery, “earthy” democratic spirit and the most vibrant of humanity.

CRAZY DRIVING *Maggie Tookey*

That piercing stare on our first meeting in Mitrovica, Northern Kosovo, is a stare never to be forgotten. I spoke about it at Stephanie’s funeral.

It was so penetrating that I felt maybe I might be in for a rough ride if I didn’t come up to scratch as the newest volunteer for a large EU-funded reconstruction project at the end of that particular war. Would I be useful or useless?

Fortunately, it seemed to be the former. Stephanie set me many tasks over those months – sometimes she took me with her to some emergency out in the destroyed villages.

Her driving was different, to put it mildly! The Kosovan roads at that time were terrible – bone crunching, vehicle shattering.

Despite this, Stephanie attacked them in the belief that to surf from one stony hillock to the next at high speed was the best way. Who was I to argue? She was my boss! Most of these

journeys were spent airborne and the car was always missing parts on arrival – parts that had been hanging on for dear life since the previous nightmare ride.

It was her desire to get to a problem quickly – to get it sorted – to bring help to those needing it that manifested itself in these death defying rides!

After long days out in the ‘field’ dealing with all sorts of problems, we volunteers would return to our digs exhausted, sweaty, hungry and just wanting to relax, wash and eat.

But Stephanie gained an admirable reputation for always being there for the countless victims of this terrible war and we would be inundated during the evenings with people coming to the house seeking help. She never turned anyone away. We were less charitable at first but we learned from her.

I shared a room with her for a long time and we would lie in bed, me exhausted and trying to drift off to sleep with Stephanie still discussing the myriad of problems needing to be dealt with – the endless number of individuals needing urgent assistance and what she should do next. She talked long into the night because she was dedicated to this cause.

This is how she unwittingly taught me about the job I now do for Edinburgh Direct Aid (EDA). I practice all those things I learned from her – except the driving!

Stephanie dramatically changed the course of my life in 2004 when she took me round to Denis Rutovitz, Chairman of EDA, and told him ‘use her, She’s good’. And Denis did! I’ve never looked back.

She continued to be interested and supportive in all the work I did for EDA in various parts of the world and we

remained close friends.

I have such happy memories of staying at St Leonards Bank, The Laundry House and Glen Lude. I will miss you loads.

HER BEDROOM WINDOW WAS ALWAYS OPEN *Laurentiu Calciu*

I had a strong affinity with Stephanie that never waned over the years. I felt that the hug she would give me when meeting after a long absence was an acknowledgement of that.

Sometimes I thought I may be filling in for her absent sons, one of whom was in a monastery and two in faraway countries. I felt I was sharing with her thoughts and feelings that she wouldn't be able to share with her own sons. She had an aura of empathy and mystery at the same time, that made one feel so good and elevated in her presence.

I remember vividly all my sojourns with her and Stewart at St Leonards Bank in the 1990s. It was such a warm (figuratively, as we will see later) and welcoming house! Especially the kitchen which was always full of people and cats. The three then existing grandchildren were there most of the time, their mother, father and grandfather sometimes; and always some strangers, new friends of her sons, from exotic places like Romania, Bosnia or Albania.

I was fond of every corner in that house, of every chair, carpet and bookshelf. I knew where everything was in the kitchen, especially the bread and the butter.

I would always sleep in the same room, next to the kitchen, and always stay in bed late, not being able to leave the Canongate book I had started the night before, but also not very keen to leave the warm duvet and venture out into the corridor and bathroom. Until Rupert or Stephanie would lose patience and come in with an inviting cup of tea.

Regardless of the season Stephanie's bedroom window was always two inches open. And so is that of the Queen, as I found out later. Coming from a warmer climate and having some Mediterranean roots too, I used to sneak from my room into the kitchen at night, after everybody was in bed, and turn the central-heating up a notch or two. Invariably, when I got out of my warm bed the next morning, I knew the dial was back to normal.

UNFORGETTABLE *Jenny Bruce*

A feisty, highly intelligent, independent woman whose heart was full of exceptional humanity and sincerity.

She tackled life in the fast lane, and drove her cars in the same way – at break-neck speed through Edinburgh, or the windy Borders lanes. Yet we still reached our destination safely.

Throughout the 13 years I knew her, we shared many memories and confidences. A holiday in Montenegro taking Jackie her dog to the vet each day after a road accident, gardening at Glenlude, catching mice in the polytunnel. Or

simply during my visits making a pot of nettle soup whilst she attended to all the ducks, geese and chickens.

My last memories were helping her to make several batches of cake for an event at Traquair last July before I flew back to Canada.

However on my return in April this year her life was slowly ebbing away, but throughout the ordeal her strength, courage and undying love of her children and grandchildren was phenomenal. I will miss her companionship and friendly banter so much.

RIP Stephanie. Thank you. You have given your grandchildren confidence, dignity, inspiration and a purpose to their lives.

PINKY *Connie Poon*

We have so many fond memories of Stephanie. We first met when she just moved into the Glen estate. From then on, she welcomed us with open arms into her life.

Stephanie never stopped. She never had enough time to achieve her to-do list (never a written list).

When she was still in the Glen, she'd often pop in for a quick glass of water or strong coffee and a secret roll-up.

One day Stephanie turned up as usual. I leaned over to kiss her. I heard the sound of a bird chirping, quite close, I thought I must be hearing things.

There we were chatting away, after the coffee and the naughty roll-up break of about 15 minutes. She announced

that she is running late for something and must go.

Just before she left she asked if I have met Pinky.

Who's Pinky? I asked.

Then she put her right hand to the back of her head. From underneath her dark silver hair she produced a tiny chick. Placed it on her shoulder.

Stephanie then said 'this is my new friend Pinky. She lives on my shoulder'.

The Stephanie I knew was always full of surprises, funny with a hint of mischief.

We were so lucky to have her in our lives, especially for my daughter Bronwyn. Stephanie was the grandmother she never had. We will miss her forevermore.

LIFE AT GLENLUDE *Chris Burn*

One day, I went to visit her at home in the Scottish Borders, a remote house up a long bumpy track set amongst hills and moorland. Sheep cluttered the landscape and a couple of horses of non-thoroughbred appearance seemed to be waiting for something emotional to happen.

A seemingly disaffected young man (later identified as her charming grandson Aidan) frowned at the distant bracken. It was as if the Brontes had moved a hundred miles north.

Stephanie was making lunch or perhaps it was brunch. The ingredients had recently been garnered from the kitchen garden and were waiting by the sink to be washed, chopped, peeled or crushed.

I offered to help and found myself sat at the kitchen table, shelling peas. Several friendly dogs of uncertain provenance came to watch. I had come to discuss the book that I had been writing and the possibility of its publication. Sitting on the chair next to me a beady-eyed rooster nodded a careful tally of every pea.

Stephanie kept rushing to the room next door to locate books, usually poetry, that she wanted me to see or read. There was soon a pile of slim works beside the pea shells. Stephanie, her hands still green from pulling spinach or some such, knew where to find each poem she wanted me to see. Her pointing fingers sometimes left a vegetal mark on the page.

Her knowledge of literature was huge and her eye for a good poem unerring. She should have produced an anthology I said, it would have been a steal. The rooster clucked approvingly. Later we talked publishing and Stephanie offered her help, which was to lead to a published book one year later.

That afternoon, we went for a short walk, finding and collecting hens' eggs and more vegetables in unlikely places along the way. Everything was of interest. Whatever we saw, met or heard merited consideration. Any topic – politics, literature, refugees, work or mutual friends could be discussed with Stephanie – you could talk forever.

My visit to her that day gave me great hope and encouragement and I am sure she gave the same to many others. I will not forget it and I hope I can pass on her example to others. She would want it like that.

EARTH MOTHER *Maija Nygren*

In early spring 2017, my little daughter Alma and I were introduced to Stephanie at Glen Lude by Rupert. We were supposed to get picked up in Innerleithen but our chauffeur (Rupert) didn't have a car.

Eventually I managed to track down a friend who drove us, via a very extended scenic route, and after stopping to ask directions (which were wrong), we found it!

I couldn't believe there could be such a place. I had been stuck in the town of Galashiels for years. I had no idea that fresh air could smell so nice, just a short drive away. The rusty orange colour of the hills against the blue sky was surreal.

Stephanie asked me 'how will you get home?'

I replied that Rupert will drive us back. (I hadn't asked him yet).

She responded, 'well I should think so. That's the least he can do after leaving you waiting for hours in town.'

I thought, I like this lady.

We drove back and Rupert casually asked if I had any interest in gardening. I was desperate to plant! Growing food is my passion, I have been living half a life without a garden.

From then on we visited every weekend.

My daughter (now four) and I were welcomed like we were old family friends. We played in the garden, stayed overnight, I got my hands dirty in the soil which relieved my stress (now a scientifically proven fact – serotonin lives in soil) from a full-on life and Alma got to hang out with a house full on fun people.

She befriended Gavin and Aidan especially. Aidan would entertain Alma endlessly by chasing her (and vice versa) up and down the corridor. Equally importantly the dogs – Safie, Jackie and Badger – and the ponies.

We met this incredibly loving, creative, passionate family, all Stephanie and Angus's incredible sons and their families, where each individual is like a force of nature. I loved it. And love it! I had found a grounding, a base, a home even, for my parents are not here (but in Finland).

Stephanie and I had endless chats about plants and plans for the garden. She questioned my raised mound planting technique which I tried to reason somehow that ... well that's how my mum does it. I failed terribly. She said, 'you haven't convinced me'. I thought 'ach well'.

We'd plan so much that we'd overwhelm each other. We'd realise this and say 'hey, let's take one step at a time', which we never did.

Those moments were energising and grounding. Although the time I spent with Stephanie wasn't lengthy, it was deep, caring, rich and meaningful.

Stephanie brought a great warmth into my life and simply made my time in the Borders magic. And I felt sane again!

I read that we are not the same once someone special leaves us, that they are part of who we are, our building blocks, and when they go, an empty space is left and we wobble. That space could be filled with something else, or left unfilled. I like that idea. We are all so very significant to each other.

When I visited Glen Lude after Stephanie moved on

(passed away) I had lunch with Rupert and Angus, with food only from the garden, and I thought of you Stephanie.

SECOND EULOGY *Gavin Wolfe Murray*

Stephanie, my mother, Mummy, the boss. She meant the world to me and I have been amazed to discover over the last few days how profoundly she affected the lives of so many people. She was a saint.

Endlessly loving, giving, thoughtful, curious. She always put others first. She always wanted to help, to care, to listen, to share, regardless of who it was.

My first memories are of Braulen, west of Inverness. Landsdowne Road in London. Glenternie in Kirkton Manor. Society House near South Queensferry, St Leonard's Bank in Edinburgh. So many happy memories.

More recently mother lived at the Laundry House at The Glen, and finally Glen Lude House, high on the hill above Traquair, with the flag flying, and flowers of every colour, and house martens feeding their young in their little mud houses under the eaves.

Wherever Mummy lived was the centre of life for the whole family and a haven for poets, lost souls, travellers, neighbours, strangers; no one was turned away. All her homes were distinct but they were all the same because she was there. The aluminium cooking pots, the indestructible oak dining table, the Beatrix Potter books, worn and frayed with nibbled pages. I read the *Tale of Miss Tiggy Winkle* to her recently. They

were very similar although my mother was a lot prettier.

Come inside, the door is open. The dogs are barking, a wonderful smell is coming from the kitchen, children are laughing, unopened letters are scattered on the table with card scores written on the back. There are seed packets, cups of tea, a pile of beetroot leaves from the polytunnel, and there is my mother chopping an onion, stirring the stew, popping rhubarb crumble into the oven, wiping her dirty garden hands on a stained and torn tea towel, then greeting me with a happy smile: 'Hello baalamb! Would you like a cup of tea?'

I want to tell you about my mother growing up in the War with her mother and her sister Virginia; how well she played the piano, the viola, organ, and flamenco guitar; the debutante staying at Blenheim Palace and gracing the covers of fashion magazines, living in Florence, New York, Paris, driving at impossible speeds on the wrong side of the road to get us to school on time, smoking opium in a tribal village in the jungles of Thailand, riding a yak in Tibet, meeting my father and talking till dawn in a tree, barefoot, grabbing the notebook from a traffic warden's hand and tearing off the first sheets and then driving away, living in a tent in Kosovo while helping displaced people, picnics on the river and on the hill, summer days making daisy chains, picking elderflowers, raspberries, blackcurrants, throwing on a thin cotton dress at the first hint of summer, and laying on a rug on the lawn, reading a book, pressing flowers into the pages of a book, publishing books with Canongate, changing the face of Scottish literature forever, a model and inspiration for women, visiting her children and grandchildren in America, the

Maldives, Romania, raising her grandchildren, swimming in the sea, at the witch's pool, living in a hut in an African village, walking into the Sahara desert to raise money for Maggie's Centre, giving endlessly to charities, passionately concerned about climate change, working to find a better way to live that would have a positive impact on people and the planet, singing in the Traquair choir, listening to Radio 4, talking about current affairs, making orange marmalade to send out at Christmas, hanging Christmas decorations, setting out the nativity figurines, cutting her own hair, rescuing stray dogs from Montenegro and Portugal and bringing them home to Scotland, holidays on Rhum, Eigg, Barra, Colonsay, Arran.

I want to tell you these things and many more but I have no more time. But I have the rest of my life to cherish the memory of my sweet mother, Stephanie. I do have the rest of my life to honour my Mother by living as well as I can, by loving and caring for others, and for the world.

Mummy, I feel you here with me always. Your spirit will never die. I love you forever.

Gavin read out this eulogy at Stephanie's funeral which took place in Peebles on the 5th of July 2017.

THE GATHERING *Susan Nickalls*

Peebles, Wednesday, 5 July 2017.

After days of Biblical rain, the skies have cleared and the sun is out as Nigel and I make our way to Peebles for Stephanie's

funeral. It seems strange even writing those words, difficult to believe that death could claim someone so beautiful, vibrant and full of life.

As we approach the commanding Old Parish Church at the foot of the High Street roundabout, we can see people gathering on the steps. The arrival of the hearse allows us to cross the busy three-way junction and it doesn't seem real to think that Stephanie is inside. But her spirit is everywhere as we connect and re-connect with people we have in common and share stories about how we know Stephanie. Nigel and I, through the charity Scottish Aid for Bosnia, worked with Stephanie during the Bosnian war, and suddenly the past seems strongly present.

I share a warm hug with Monica whom I haven't seen since our boys first met as babies in Mostar and later played together as toddlers in Edinburgh.

The church fills up with many familiar faces from the publishing and international aid worlds as a string quartet plays beautiful lilting Scottish airs. Other veterans of that unspeakably horrific war file in too: the extraordinary and indefatigable Denis Rutovitz and his wife Jeanne Bell from Edinburgh Direct Aid (EDA), Roxanna Pope and Toby Gough who were working with Stephanie at Scottish European Aid. I'll never forget them 'appearing' in Sarajevo during the war as if by magic, arriving through the tunnel with the Mayor of Tuzla, popping up like white rabbits in the antithesis of Wonderland, a besieged city everyone was trying to escape.

Nigel recalls how they were swithering about coming and it was Stephanie who insisted that they went. War

correspondent Paul Harris, who shared many perilous Balkan journeys with Nigel, is also here. It was Stephanie who published his book *Cry Bosnia* at Canongate.

We stand to sing *All Things Bright and Beautiful* as Stephanie's environmentally-friendly coffin, bedecked with the most glorious flowers, joins us. The Traquair Village Choir sings with passion before we hear the moving tributes. Gavin gives us a lively snapshot of Stephanie's life from glamorous London debutante and magazine cover girl to her adventurous thrills and spills in numerous war zones. Maggie Tookey, who now works in Syria with Edinburgh Direct Aid, also worked with Stephanie. She describes a bone-shaking journey in Kosovo as Stephanie drove a Landover over craterous roads at great speed, as if aquaplaning. Speed is a recurrent theme in many of the tributes, a perfect illustration of how Stephanie embraced life, living every second to the wire.

There is heart-breaking poetry: from Angus, EE Cummings *I carry your heart with me*; Nikita, Neruda; and Moona, a poem Monica wrote about Stephanie which exquisitely captures her spirit and essence. Whilst on holiday in the Mediterranean with Stephanie and Moona, Monica describes a chance meeting with a stern-looking local woman whom Stephanie immediately melted and bonded with, exchanging stories of 'divino' peaches and finding out they each had a grandchild born on the same day. It is all there, Stephanie's boundless curiosity, warmth, love and kindness. This is a constant theme throughout the day.

Most impressive though are her amazing grandchildren: Jude, Lara, Luca, Nathan, Caleb, Aidan, Nikita and Kira, who

tell heart-warming stories and make up poems about their granny. Stephanie would have been immensely proud.

Rupert's reading of *Song of Songs*, 'set me a seal upon your heart', is deeply poignant and the 'passion' and 'flashes of fire' it speaks about are very apt for Stephanie. The last hymn is Jerusalem, and although something of a strange choice, it feels somehow appropriate. There is not a dry eye in the church before the final blessing as Caleb plays guitar and sings one of his recent compositions.

Afterwards, on the steps outside the church and in the village hall at Traquair, there are further reunions. Ricky Demarco is there as is Tim Neat. He has drawn the most ethereal pictures of Stephanie's spiritual presence during the funeral. On the walls of the hall are tributes to Stephanie along with some wonderful photographs of her, documenting the various times, and many strands, of her remarkable life.

She was, and is, an example to us all of how to live and love selflessly, in the moment, for the greater good. The world is the poorer without her and we shall all miss her.

Usually at funerals, a minister will mutter something pieced together from various people and it never has that veracity of personal experience. For once, unusually, every single word uttered was absolutely true!

PROUD I AM TO BE YOUR KIN
Nathan Wolfe Murray

I thank you for all you have taught to me
Sunrise and Spring in the form of a voice
But to be lost in loss would misserve thee
Brightest soul your great life I shall rejoice
But to think of never meeting again
Could cruelly take the colour from the sun
Grief and regret may break the heart in twain
Your life in memory will make it one
Guiding being of light, you've seen me through
Good cheer and sorrow; kindness you supply
To paraphrase a better poet, To
Live in hearts left behind is not to die

Proud I am to be your kin, and over all
Proud to have known such a beautiful soul
I love you