

FROM THE RNA ARCHIVE

'A book is rather like a baby,' said novelist Gavin Lyall. 'It's comparatively easy to start, takes about nine months to make, the last hours are always difficult – and it's a long time before it earns a living. '

RNA meeting January 1967

Vice President Anne Maybury won the "lead" in local press reports by saying that the time was approaching when readers would be bored by sex books.

RNA dinner, Norwich, 1968

No of books written

	1968 <i>RNA News</i>	2000 <i>at end of writing lives</i>	Writing Names
A P Herbert	8	8	1
Agatha Christie	77	86	2
Dennis Wheatley	53	74	1
Ursula Bloom	400+	500+	6
Denise Robins	154	179	6
Barbara Cartland	116	700+	2

RAGE

Constance Heaven wrote the 1973 Romantic Novel of the Year, *The House of Kuragin* 'in a fit of rage ...to give the publishers what they wanted and show them!'

ST VALENTINE'S DAY 1974

Lucilla Andrews appeared on *Woman's Hour* for St Valentine's Day , in a discussion with Benedict Nightingale. Asked to define romance, Lucilla said that it was 'Pure Cinderella'. But her own heroines were always busy, modern, working women who had to fit their personal love stories into the main business of living. Benedict Nightingale made the interesting point that by reading romantic novels a man could discover the qualities that women appreciated in men – which were very different from what men fondly imagined. Lucilla gave her opinion that *kindness* was the most important quality in a hero – and a heroine.

RNA Newsletter Spring 1974

MYSTERIOUS AUTHOR

Even her publisher did not get to meet Madeleine Brent, winner of the 1978 Romantic Novel of the Year with *Merlin's Keep*. Years later she admitted 'she' was Peter O'Donnell – author of *Modesty Blaise*.

FEMINIST

Jane Aiken Hodge at the 1988 RNA Awards Lunch said, 'I am both a feminist and a romantic writer. I am proud of both.'

SEX

Founder Member of the RNA Anne Vinton 'remembered the days when Mills & Boon would blue pencil our love scenes as not being suitable for sales in Ireland!'

RNA Newsletter Autumn 1991

TITLES

Pride and Prejudice (working title *First Impressions*) is probably taken from Fanny Burney's *Cecilia*: 'The whole of this unfortunate business . . . has been the result of Pride and Prejudice.'