

CHISWICK BOOK FESTIVAL

CHISWICK TIMELINE

WRITERS TRAIL

36 notable dramatists, novelists and poets who lived in Chiswick

sponsored by

THE CHISWICK CINEMA

DRAMATISTS

- 1 **Carla Lane OBE** 1928-2016. TV dramatist: 1970s & 80s hit sitcoms including *The Liver Birds*, *Bread*, *Butterflies* (with Chiswick actress Wendy Craig, who said: "She understood women and wrote the truth about them.") In the 1980s lived in Zoffany House (blue plaque to painter Johann Zoffany). [Zoffany House, 65 Strand on the Green, W4 3PF \(Private house, no access\)](#)
- 2 **Harold Pinter** 1947-2008. One of theatre's most influential dramatists. Wrote *The Caretaker* when he rented a flat here in 1958-63, and a tramp was invited to stay. Numerous plays and screenplays. Oscar nominee, Best Adapted Screenplay 1981 (*The French Lieutenant's Woman*), 1983 (*Betrayal*). Nobel Prize for Literature 2005. Biography by Chiswick's Michael Billington. [373 Chiswick High Road, W4 4AG \(Private house, no access\)](#)
- 3 **Patrick Hamilton** 1904-1962. Dramatist: *Gaslight*, *Rope*. Novelist: Autobiographical trilogy *Twenty Thousand Streets Under the Sky*: scenes set here where he lived on and off, 1914-28. BBC Four series directed by Chiswick's Simon Curtis. [2 Burlington Gardens, W4 4LT - Blue plaque. \(Private house, no access\)](#)
- 4 **Anthony Burgess** 1917-1993. Poet, Dramatist: *Jesus of Nazareth*. Novelist: *A Clockwork Orange*. Moved to Chiswick in 1963 to review TV for *The Listener* and mark Shakespeare's 1964 quatercentenary (with novel *Nothing Like the Sun*). While here wrote *Tremor of Intent*, *Enderby Outside* and a Shakespeare musical *The Bawdy Bard*. Left for Italy in 1968. [24 Glebe Street, W4 2BG \(Private house, no access\)](#)
- 5 **Sir Arthur Wing Pinero** 1855-1934. Dramatist: *The Magistrate*, *The Second Mrs Tanqueray*, *Trelawny of the Wells*. Lived in Bedford Park 1883-84 till success of *The Magistrate* led to him building a house in Harley Street. [10 Marlborough Crescent, W4 1HF \(Private house, no access\)](#)
- 6 **Edgar Wallace** 1875-1932. One of the most prolific and most filmed authors of all time. Novelist, dramatist, journalist. Creator *King Kong*, *The Four Just Men*, *Sanders of the River*, *Edgar Wallace Mysteries*. Lived in Bedford Park c. 1904-06, son was born in Brentford. [Flanders Road, W4](#)
- 7 **Alun Owen** 1925-1994. Dramatist. *No Trams to Lime Street*, *Maggie May*. Oscar nominee, Best Original Screenplay 1964 (*A Hard Day's Night*). Lived in Chiswick 1985-94. Acted with Harold Pinter (ibid) in the restaurant scene in *The Servant*. [4 Upham Park Road, W4 1PG \(Private house, no access\)](#)
- 8 **Lynn Redgrave OBE** 1943-2010. Actor, dramatist: *Shakespeare for My Father* (about Sir Michael Redgrave), *The Mandrake Root* (about her mother Rachel Kempson), *Nightingale* (inspired by her grandmother). As a child, lived with her parents, sister Vanessa and brother Corin on Chiswick

Mall (1945-54). Tony Award, Best Actress (*Shakespeare for My Father*). [Bedford House, Chiswick Mall W4 2PJ. \(Private house, no access\)](#)

- 9 **Robert Bolt** 1924-1995. Dramatist: *A Man for All Seasons*. Screenwriter: *Dr Zhivago*, *Lawrence of Arabia*. Oscar, Best Adapted Screenplay 1965 (*Dr Zhivago*) & 1966 (*A Man for All Seasons*). Lived in Hartington Road c. 1982-6. [29 Hartington Road, W4 3TL. \(Private house, no access\)](#)
- 10 **John Osborne** 1929-1994. Dramatist: Living on Chiswick houseboat, sent script of *Look Back In Anger* to George Devine of the English Stage Company, who rowed out to option it for £25 in 1955. Oscar, Best Adapted Screenplay 1963 (*Tom Jones*). [Cubitts Yacht Basin, now Chiswick Quay, W4 3UR. \(Private estate\)](#)

+ See also: Dylan Thomas (26), WB Yeats (28)

NOVELISTS

- 11 **Nancy Mitford** 1904-1973. Novelist: *The Pursuit of Love*, *Love In A Cold Climate*. Lived in Chiswick 1934-36 while married to Peter Robb. Wrote *Wigs on The Green* here, a satire on the Mosleys, causing a rift between the Mitford sisters. [Rose Cottage, 84 Strand on the Green, W4 3PU \(Private house, no access\)](#)
- 12 **Geoffrey Household** 1900-1988. Writer of novels, short stories and children's plays. *Rogue Male*, filmed by BBC (1976) at suggestion of Chiswick's Richard Broke, starring Peter O'Toole. Lived at Strand on the Green, 1949-54. Roasted a whole deer on Oliver's Eyot for the Coronation! [29 Strand on the Green, W4 3PH \(private house, no access\)](#)
- 13 **Dame Iris Murdoch** 1919-1992. Novelist: *The Bell*, *A Severed Head*. Booker Prize 1978 (*The Sea, The Sea*). Brought up at 4 Eastbourne Road W4 3EB where her parents lived 1926-59. Lived briefly at 55 Barrowgate Road W4 4QT while their home was being repaired after bomb damage. [4 Eastbourne Road, W4 3EB. \(Private house, no access\)](#)
- 14 **JG Ballard** 1930-2009. Novelist: *Empire of the Sun*, *Crash*. Lived in a flat in Barrowgate Road 1955-57 after 30 Fairlawn Avenue W4 5EF. Wrote short stories before living in Shepperton and writing full-time. Walked in Chiswick House Gardens with young daughter: pictured on Writers Trail website. [69 Barrowgate Road, W4 4QS. \(Private house, no access\)](#)
- 15 **EM Forster** 1879-1970. Novelist: *A Room with a View*, *Howards End*, *A Passage to India*. Had 'pied a terre' here from 1939, when he broadcast reviews for the BBC and wrote short stories, till 1970. Nobel Prize nominee (in 16 different years). Companion of Honour, Order of Merit. [9 Arlington Park Mansions, W4 4HE - Blue plaque. \(Private house, no access\)](#)

- 16 **Alain-Fournier** 1886-1914. French novelist, anglophile: a key scene in *Le Grand Meaulnes* was inspired by a works fete at Sanderson & Sons in Chiswick where in 1905, aged 19, he worked as a translator. This in turn inspired a scene in *The Great Gatsby*. Letters from his time here appear in *Towards the Lost Domain: Letters from London, 1905*, edited by WJ Strachan. [Voysey House, Barley Mow Passage, W4 4PN \(no access\)](#)
- 17 **Ralph Griffiths** 1720-1803. Publisher: *Fanny Hill*. Editor: *The Monthly Review*, London's first successful literary magazine. Lived in Chiswick c 1760-1803, among a literary circle. [Linden House, Turnham Green \(demolished, now Linden Gardens W4 2EQ\)](#)
- 18 **Sergius Stepniak** 1851-1895. Russian writer: *Underground Russia*. Said to be the model for the Russian exile in *The Railway Children*. Friend of William Morris and GB Shaw. Killed by a train at Woodstock Road level crossing. [31 Blandford Road W4 1DX \(1893-95\) and 48 Woodstock Road W4 1UF \(1895\) \(Private houses, no access\)](#)
- 19 **GK Chesterton*** 1874-1936. Novelist, poet, critic, known for the *Father Brown* stories. In *The Man Who Was Thursday*, "Saffron Park" is a parody of Bedford Park: his fiancée lived in Bath Road and he knew WB Yeats and other residents. [Bath Road, Bedford Park, W4 1TT](#)
- 20 **William Morris** 1834-96. Poet, novelist, designer, printer, social activist, Arts & Crafts pioneer. *The Earthly Paradise*, *News From Nowhere*. Lived in Chiswick 1872-8, prior to Kelmscott House, Hammersmith. [Horrington House \(demolished\), near The Roebuck and Thornton Ave.](#)
- 21 **Stephen Potter** 1900-1969. Author: novels, biographies (*DH Lawrence*), parody self-help books. *Gamesmanship*, *Oneupmanship*. BBC TV series *Oneupmanship*, with Richard Briers as Stephen Potter. Lived Chiswick Mall on & off 1927-51. [Thames Bank and No 2 Riverside, Chiswick Mall, W4 \(private houses, no access\)](#)
- 22 **WM Thackeray** 1811-1863. Novelist, satirist: *Vanity Fair* opens in Chiswick Mall at Mrs Pinkerton's Academy, based on Walpole House where Thackeray went to school in 1817. Opening chapter is called 'Chiswick Mall'. [Walpole House, Chiswick Mall, W4 2PS \(private house, no access\) but also see Chiswick Square W4 2QG - a sign claims it was where Becky Sharpe threw the dictionary.](#)
- 23 **Samuel Richardson** 1689-1761. Novelist and printer. *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded*; *Clarissa, or the History of a Young Lady*. Described as "one of the fathers of the English novel". Rented house near Corney House 1736-38 [House near Corney House \(demolished\), now Corney Reach Way](#)
- 24 **Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire** 1757-1806. Socialite, novelist: *The Sylph* was published anonymously in 1778 and reprinted four times. Republished 2007 on 250th anniversary

of her birth. Called Chiswick House 'my earthly paradise'. [Chiswick House and Gardens, W4 2QN. Free access to the gardens, for house see opening times, chiswickhouseandgardens.org.uk](#)

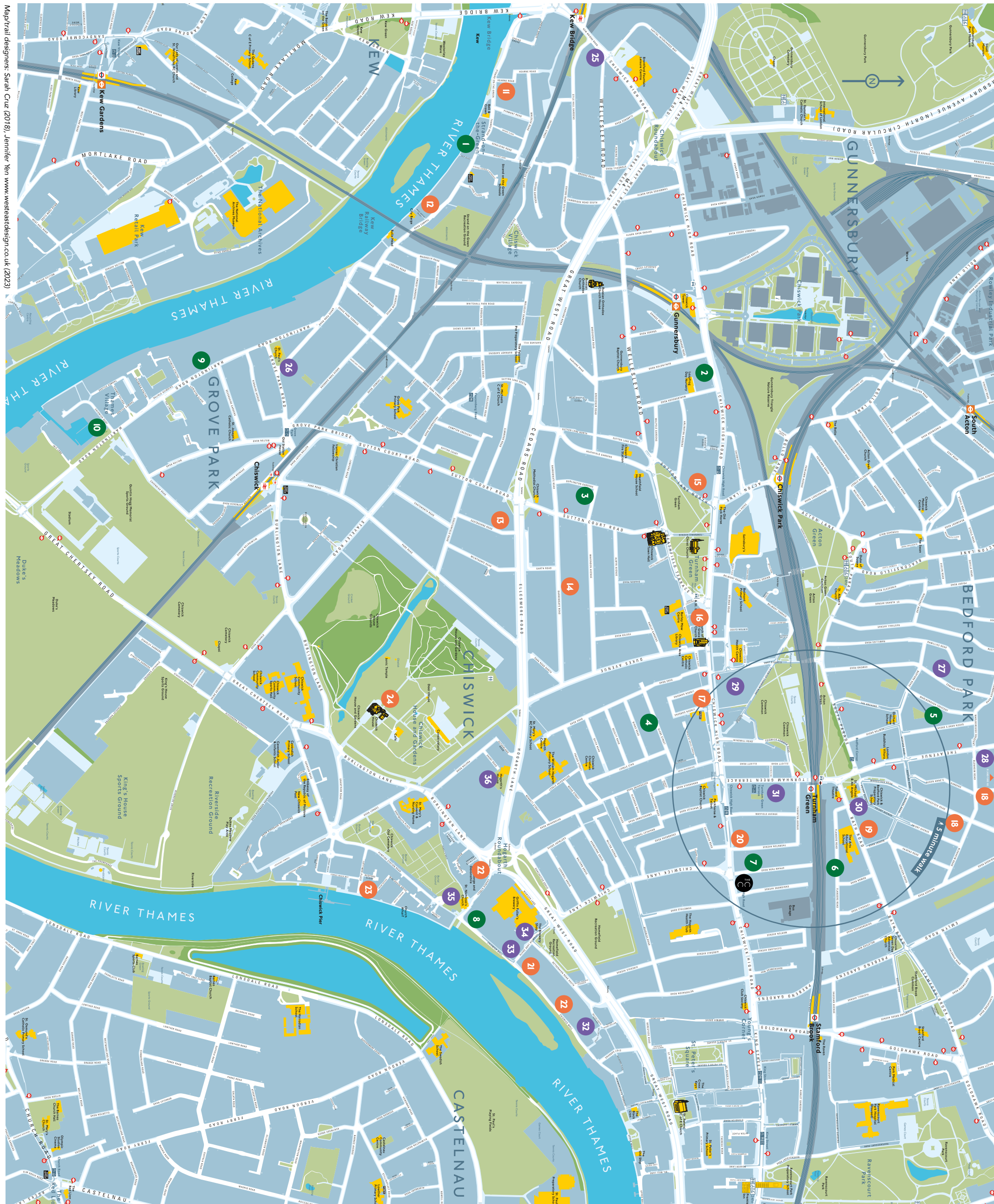
+ See also Patrick Hamilton (3), Anthony Burgess (4), Edgar Wallace (6)

POETS

- 25 **Lady Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke** 1561-1621. Poet and literary patron. *Sidney Psalter*. Turned Wilton House, Wiltshire, into a "paradise for poets". Daughter of Elizabeth I's confidante - also named Lady Mary Sidney, nee Dudley - who lived behind Strand on the Green, 1574-86. From the age of 13, Lady Mary lived there too, visited by brother, Sir Philip Sidney, poet, courtier and soldier. [Sidney House, close to Stile Hall and Strand on the Green \(demolished\)](#)
- 26 **Dylan Thomas** 1914-53. Poet, dramatist, broadcaster. *Do not go gentle into that good night*, *Under Milk Wood*, *A Child's Christmas in Wales*, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Dog*. Lived in St Paul's Vicarage, Grove Park c. 1938-41; 13 Hammersmith Terrace 1941-2. Also stayed at Ship Cottage, Strand on the Green and frequented local pubs. [64 Grove Park Road \(St Paul's Vicarage\), W4 3SB. \(Private house, no access\)](#)
- 27 **Michael Flanders OBE** 1922-1975. Writer: comic songs and opera librettos, actor, performer (with Donald Swann) and disability campaigner. At *The Drop of A Hat* including *The Gnu Song*, *The Hippopotamus Song*, *A Transport of Delight*. Lived in Bedford Park 1971-5. Ashes scattered in Chiswick House Gardens. Michael Flanders Centre in Acton founded in his honour. [63 Esmond Road, W4 - Ealing Civic Society plaque. \(Private house, no access\)](#)
- 28 **WB Yeats** 1865-1939. Poet: *The Lake Isle of Innisfree* was written here, perhaps inspired by Chiswick Eyot. Grew up in Bedford Park 1876-80, 1888-94, among a literary circle - visitors included GB Shaw. Wrote first play here, later founded Irish National Theatre (Abbey Theatre, Dublin). Nobel Prize for Literature 1923. See WB Yeats Smartphone Trail. [8 Woodstock Road W4 1UE and 3 Blenheim Road, W4 1UB. \(Green plaque, Bedford Park Society\) \(Private houses, no access\)](#)
- 29 **James Berry OBE** 1924-2017. 'Poet of the Windrush generation'. Collections incl *Windrush Songs*, *A Story I Am In*, *Only One of Me* (republished 2022). Winner: National Poetry Competition, Cholmondeley Award. Plus poetry and short stories for children. Smarties Prize, Signal Poetry Award. Lived in Chiswick from 1983 to 2011, latterly at Homecross House. [Homecross House, Fishers Lane, W4 \(Private, no access\)](#)

- 30 **Sir John Betjeman*** 1906-1984. Poet Laureate (1972-1984), heritage campaigner. *The dogs do bark in Bedford Park*. Patron of the Bedford Park Society from 1963 and Bedford Park Festival from 1967, helping save first garden suburb from developers. [St Michael & All Angels Church, Bedford Park, W4 1TT](#)
- 31 **Elizabeth Moody** 1737-1814. Poet and critic, *Monthly Review*, *St James's Chronicle*. *To a Lady Who Sent The Author a Present of a Fashionable Bonnet* (*Guardian* Poem of the Week 2018), *To a Lady Who Was A Great Talker*. Married the dissenting minister Christopher Lake Moody in 1777; they moved to Turnham Green Terrace to be closer to Ralph Griffiths (ibid). [Turnham Green Terrace, W4](#)
- 32 **Sir John (J. C.) Squire** 1884-1958. Poet (*The Survival of the Fittest*) and man of letters; editor, *New Statesman*, *the London Mercury* for 20 years; loved (and detested) by great names of literary society; satirised by Evelyn Waugh in *Decline and Fall*; founder of legendary cricket club (in *England, Their England*). Lived in Chiswick Mall 1913-25. [Swan House, Chiswick Mall, W4 2PS \(Private house, no access\)](#)
- 33 **John Donne*** 1572-1631. Poet, priest, Prebendary of Chiswick 1621-31. *The Flea*, *Death Be Not Proud*, *The Sun Rising*. Dean of St Paul's from 1621 to his death. He probably visited Chiswick and would have used the Prebendal Manor House which stood on Chiswick Mall. 'Among his finest sermons are five on the psalms he was required to recite as Prebendary of Chiswick' - *Church Times*. [Prebendal Manor House, Chiswick Mall \(demolished\)](#)
- 34 **Alexander Pope** 1688-1774. Poet, essayist, satirist. *The Rape of the Lock*, *The Dunciad*. Translated Homer's *Iliad* while living with his parents in Mawson Row ("ye New Buildings Chiswick"), from 1716-19. Portrait of him by William Kent in Chiswick House, owned by his friend Lord Burlington. [House in Mawson Buildings, later the Mawson Arms pub \(since closed\), Chiswick Lane South W4 2QD \(plaque and sign\)](#)
- 35 **Ugo Foscolo** 1778-1827. Italian poet and patriot: *Dei Sepolcri*. Lived in Chiswick High Road for last months of his life, buried in St Nicholas churchyard in marble chest tomb, but remains were returned to Florence at the King of Italy's request. [St Nicholas Churchyard, Chiswick Mall W4 2PJ](#)
- 36 **Rev Henry Francis Cary** 1772-1844. Poet. Translated Dante's *Inferno* and *Divine Comedy* - the best translation in any language according to Ugo Foscolo (ibid). From 1814, Reader or Curate at St Nicholas Chiswick. Lived with his family at Hogarth's House. Moved to Bloomsbury when he became Assistant Librarian at the British Museum 1826-37. Buried in Poet's Corner, Westminster Abbey. [Hogarth's House, Hogarth Lane \(admission free, see days/times at www.hogarthshouse.org\)](#)

+ See also Anthony Burgess (4), GK Chesterton (20), William Morris (21)



Map/trail designers: Sarah Cruz (2018), Jennifer Yen www.westeastdesign.co.uk (2023)

Chiswick's writers have created some of the country's greatest works, from Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* to Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* and Pinter's *The Caretaker*. Follow this **Writers Trail** map to find places in W4 linked to 36 notable dramatists, novelists and poets. It boasts one Booker Prize, two Nobel Prizes for Literature, three Oscars, five plaques and a Poet Laureate (see *The Observer*, right).

The Writers Trail forms part of the **Chiswick Timeline of Writers & Books**, an online archive of more than 400 writers who have lived in Chiswick - or are linked with the area* - and written a book. It is listed chronologically and by genre at www.chiswickbookfestival.net

It was inspired by the **Chiswick Timeline: A History in Art and Maps**, the remarkable mural situated under the bridges outside Turnham Green tube station. This was created by Karen Liebreich and Sarah Cruz of Abundance London, with Transport for London, and includes the Legible London map. See details at www.chiswicktimeline.org

Put the word out: Chiswick may be Britain's most literary location

Vanessa Thorpe

News

EM FORSTER 1879-1970
Novelist lived here

For his literary fiction and his novel *Maurice*, Forster won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1953. He was a member of the Bloomsbury Group and a close friend of Virginia Woolf. He lived in Chiswick from 1910 to 1920, where he wrote *Maurice* and *The Machine Stops*. He was also a member of the Chiswick Book Festival.

Each September, the **Chiswick Book Festival** brings together top authors and their readers for a week of talks on a range of fiction, non-fiction and children's books.

It is a non-profit-making community event, raising money for three reading charities and **St Michael & All Angels Church**, which organises the festival with support from local businesses, media and many volunteers. Sign up for news updates: www.chiswickbookfestival.net/join-our-mailing-list

Festival venues include St Michael & All Angels Church & Parish Hall, Chiswick House & Gardens, ArtsEd, Chiswick Library, the Theatre at the Tabard, George IV, Orchard House School, Hogarth's House

and **The Chiswick Cinema**, the sponsor of this Writers Trail map. See its latest programme and membership details at www.chiswickcinema.co.uk 94-96 Chiswick High Road, W4 1SH

The Chiswick Cinema also runs the **Chiswick In Film Festival** with **The Chiswick Calendar**, including several names on this Writers Trail. See: www.chiswickcalendar.co.uk/chiswick-in-film-festival-2022

Enlarge this map/trail on your mobile device. Discover more of Chiswick's Arts and Heritage trails at **'Exploring Chiswick'**: www.chiswickbookfestival.net/exploring-chiswick-2022