

Lower Harwood Stories

So far there are two stories set in the fictional British village of Lower Harwood. The first of these was a short story called [Rounds](#) which was written for my Open University Creative Writing course. *Rounds* was also included in my book [Themself](#).

The second follows on directly from *Rounds* and was written for the [NYC Midnight Flash Fiction Challenge 2017](#). It is called Down the Harbour and had to be written as a romance set in a harbour with a bandage in the story. It seemed reasonable to set it in Lower Harwood given that I only had a few hours notice to write it. The Challenge gives you 48 hours, but I was at cub camp that weekend and it left me only a couple of hours of writing time to get in a 1,000 word story that met the requirements.

Lower Harwood

I deliberately chose to label these as being set in a village rather than by character as I think there may be scope for a range of interesting short stories about village life. Lower Harwood is completely fictional, yet completely real at the same time. All of the locations set in the book are heavily based on real places, but they aren't all in the same place, nor do they all still exist. Using my memories of real places lets me give realistic descriptions and also fill them with authentic detail.

What I have done is move these around spatially and temporally. Most of the locations are drawn from the village I grew up in, and ones I've spent time in as an adult. Notably Old Kilpatrick, Merstham and Godstone have all contributed more than one location. What I need to do next is draw a map that shows how these lay out next to each other.

Characters

Both stories have the same main character. Alice (surname as yet unspecified) is a recently qualified midwife who works in the local community, her Granny Jack was a midwife pre-dating the NHS (she might be Alice's great grandmother, and would be in her mid-nineties at least if the story is set in 2017).

Other characters that feature are:

- Fiona - a childhood friend of Alice's, expecting twins. Her mother Gena died giving birth to her.
- Davie - a young man that does gardening for the elderly
- Rachel - a young woman, who likes Davie, neighbour of Granny Jack
- Billy Fleming - a Scot and a keen gardener who lives in Stuart Street, divorced with a four year old child (AKA Little Jock) he watches while his ex-wife is at work.
- Dianne Dowding - younger sister of a friend of Alice's. Just turned 18 and studying at the college. Has a crush on Ed Cairns.
- Mrs Dowding - Dianne's mother. Well meaning and concerned.
- Ed Cairns - a serious student with a wish to go to Cambridge. Usually found in the library.
- Mo - new chef at The Harbour. Shoulder length dyed green hair and striking hazel eyes. Early

twenties (about the same age as Alice).

- Harry the handyman - a handyman, as his nick-name suggests...
- Debs - a work colleague of Alice's

[harwood](#), [story](#), [background](#)

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