

# Reading the Forest

Forest of Dean people, places and traditions have appeared in books of fiction, fact, and fable, poems, comedy and plays since at least the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Our aim is to encourage people of all ages to engage with this rich seam of stories set in and about our Forest.

- Local events & exhibitions
- Research
- Working with schools
- A Forest of Dean Anthology
- Sharing information

The project is led by Forest-based academics at the University of Gloucestershire, supported by an active team of local volunteers.

*Would you like to join our team?*

*Write a Forest book review?*

Call Forest Voluntary Action Forum  
01594 822073

Contact us via our website



# a new mural for Cinderford

## *Celebrating Forest of Dean Writers*

On the side of the former 'Dairy' café & bakery building, this new mural marks three successful & prolific Forest of Dean authors with strong connections to the Cinderford area.

Created by local artist  
**Tom Cousins**  
working with  
Reading the Forest.  
[www.tomcousins.co.uk](http://www.tomcousins.co.uk)



Made possible through funding from the Foresters' Forest National Lottery Program, and support from the University of Gloucestershire.



...with special thanks to  
Karen & Andy of the  
Palace Cinema for the use  
of their wall.

# a new mural for Cinderford



## *Celebrating Forest of Dean Writers*

# Who are the people in the pictures?

2 Woodside Street,  
Cinderford,  
GL142NL

# Leonard Clark



1905-1981

- Poet
- Educationalist
- Literary editor

A prolific writer, he produced hundreds of poems during his life time, with many written specially for children.

His writing often reflected his love of nature, much of it describing the woods, fields and also the people of his childhood growing up in the Forest. He wrote biography and auto biography, as well as children's stories.

Working as a schools inspector he advised on education and edited many collections of poetry for children. He was admired by Ted Hughes and other major poets of his time, and was awarded an OBE. A plaque marks his final resting place in Stephen's Church, Cinderford - back once again in his much loved Forest of Dean.

#### Some of his books....

- *Green Wood* (1962)
- *A Fool in the Forest* (1965)
- *Grateful Caliban* (1967)
- *An Inspector Remembers* (1976)

# Winifred Foley



1914-2009

- Memoirist
- Novelist
- Performer

Her career as a writer began in later life when her stories about growing up in the Forest and life 'in service' were serialised on BBC radio's Woman's Hour. This was then published as the book, *A Child in the Forest*. It became a massive success, published over several editions, and was dramatised for television. As well as several more books about her life and the people she knew, she also wrote short novels, and a play. She was an accomplished performer of her work, making several recordings, and appeared on BBC radio and television. Her books remain an invaluable insight into working-class life in the early twentieth century.

#### Some of her books....

- *A Child in the Forest* (1974)
- *No Pipe Dreams for Father* (1977)
- *Back to the Forest* (1981)
- *Village Fates* (2000)

# Harry Beddington



1901-1986

- Poet & commentator
- Playwright
- Performer

His books were written almost entirely in Forest dialect. A regular correspondent in *The Dean Forest Mercury* newspaper, he was a lifelong resident of Cinderford. He commented on contemporary Forest life, painting a rich picture full of local characters who are never quite as daft as they first seem. As an active member of the Mintec drama society he acted and wrote several plays. An engaging performer he appeared on BBC radio and made several recordings. He helped make 'Jolter', the mythical Forest character he assumed for some his newspaper stories and live performances, an iconic figure. A keen amateur artist he also illustrated some of his books.

#### Some of his books....

- *Footing the Bill: A Farce in One Act* (1946)
- *Forest of Dean Humour* (1961)
- *Forest Acorns* (1963)
- *Forest Humour* (1977)