



**PRESS RELEASE 8 April 2026**

**War Artist, Historians and Crime Writers Headline Sturminster Newton Literary Festival 2026**

The internationally acclaimed war artist, George Butler, will discuss his illustrative work in Ukraine and other conflict zones at the 2026 Sturminster Newton Literary Festival. George Butler is known for his thought provoking work that goes beyond the headlines and highlights stories that never reach the news.

Military historian and author Damien Lewis will be highlighting daring tales of the SAS. Kate Werran's talk promotes her research into Black American troops stationed in the Westcountry in World War Two and who were often treated inequitably by the US Army.

Dorset writer and journalist Faith Eckersall will discuss cosy crime and her latest book set in Wimborne while Mark Bridgeman returns with his popular interactive true crime event where the audience become the jury. Travel writer Nick Jubber will be taking the audience on a global journey of monsters. Giles and Annie Henschel of Olives et Al will be speaking about their 10,000 mile journey revisiting olive groves and the impact climate change is having on the harvest.

This year there are literary walks, a showcase of local writers, and a special writing workshop in partnership with the University of Exeter for people from Ukraine and their host families. Festival chair Pauline Batstone said: "This is our seventh literary festival and again we offer a varied and interesting mix of authors and events - we hope as many people as are able come to enjoy. Thank you to the team, especially Rachael Rowe, who have brought this about".

The festival runs from 12-21 June 2026. Tickets and the programme are available at [www.sturlitfest.com](http://www.sturlitfest.com) and from 1855 Sturminster Newton.

Ends

Note for editors. For more photos, details of speakers, contacts etc, please contact [info@sturlitfest.com](mailto:info@sturlitfest.com).

Sturminster Newton Literary Festival celebrates the historic writers connected to the town, writers with a Dorset and Wessex connection, and aspiring writers.