

Hugh McMillan

Dumfries

Writers' Walks



Hugh McMillan

Hugh McMillan is a poet and writer who lives in Penpont.

His latest book 'Curiosities' (Tippermuir Press) subverts some old Galloway stories into unrecognisable nonsense.



Hugh McMillan
hughmcmillanwriter.co.uk





Writers' Walks



Dumfries

River Nith, Kingholm Quay, Crichton Garden, Castledykes Park, Coach and Horses.

Distance- 3.9 miles

Terrain- mostly flat, gentle uphill section Kingholm to Crichton

Time to walk- approx. 1hr 30 mins

This walk encapsulates much of what I like about Dumfries- its history, its river, its gentle decay but more than that, it captures a part of my life, and my writing life. Several poems have been written during and after this walk, usually pushing my daughter's buggy. The Coach and Horses is a suitable literary conclusion, being the pub that Robert Fergusson started his epic pub crawl of Dumfries in 1773, having walked all the way from Edinburgh.

Special Thanks is given to Hugh McMillan
for his support in producing Writers' Walks
for Wigtown Book Festival 2026.

August

(To Andrea and Grievy)

Summer in the town.

The rain is solid,
you can see tall trees drowning in it,
roads like tongues vomiting it out.

Lydia and I, dressed for Malibu,
are stuck in a bus shelter,
listening to its corrugated tattoo,
and the howl of cars bent on fat puddles.

It's a minimalist structure,
no comfort to be given to the frail,
or the knackered,
only concrete and flaking paint
and a family of leaks.

The thing about here, though,
is that Andrea loved Grievy in 1993.

It is written huge,
repeatedly, in many styles,
in the middle of walls,
the corners, and in patterns like
webs leaking from the roof tiles,
and we are suddenly warmed, the baby and I,
to know that ten years ago, love was born here
strong enough to stencil,
to painstakingly colour,
to shade in different felt pens,
as the endlessly knuckle-headed world
caroomed past, oblivious as ever
to the small miracles that make it worth
a damn.