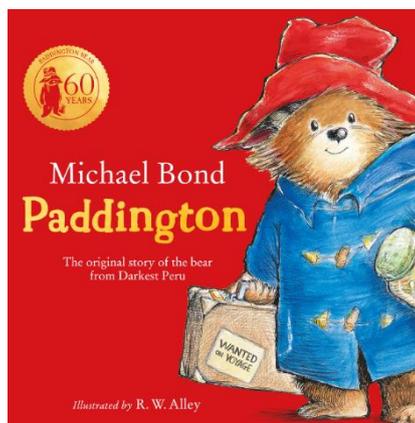


60 Years of Paddington Bear

HARPERCOLLINS CHILDREN'S BOOKS ANNOUNCE 60th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS FOR BRITAIN'S MOST BELOVED BEAR

Press release: London 12 March 2018. In 1958 when HarperCollins first published *A Bear Called Paddington*, one of literature's most iconic and endearing characters was born. Six decades later, Michael Bond's beloved Paddington Bear continues to delight generations of children, parents and grandparents with his well-intentioned deeds and misadventures. The Paddington books have sold over 35 million copies worldwide and his adventures have been translated into 40 different languages. The bear appeared this year in the UK as a World Book Day title in *Paddington Turns Detective*, reaching new readers with sales of over 50,000 to date.

A Bear Called Paddington was first published in October 1958, with exquisite illustrations by Peggy Fortnum, and went on to become one of the best-known children's books of all time. To commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the small bear from darkest Peru, HarperCollins Children's Books has created a range of glorious anniversary publishing and a programme of events that will delight fans, young and old.



Paddington, like the Queen, has two birthdays. When Mr and Mrs Brown found him 60 years ago they decided they would celebrate his birthday twice on 25th June *and* 25th December – and in honour of this, the anniversary celebrations will start in June and run until Christmas! The publishing launches with *Paddington at St Paul's* (HB 12.99), the last title written by Michael Bond and a new edition of the first picture book *Paddington* (PB £6.99). In October, just in time for Christmas, comes a lavish new hardback edition of the original *A Bear Called Paddington* illustrated in full-colour by Peggy Fortnum (HB £20.00), and a new compendium of classic stories *The Complete Adventures of Paddington* (HB £40.00) - the perfect gift for any Paddington Bear aficionado.

Throughout the summer Paddington will be celebrated across the country with a host of parties, storytelling events and appearances by the bear himself. HarperCollins Children's Books will also be launching a nationwide Paddington schools campaign to introduce the next generation of children to the delights of reading the Paddington stories.

Speaking about the anniversary Ann-Janine Murtagh, Executive Publisher said: "We are proud to have been the home of Paddington Bear for the last 60 years and most especially feel privileged to have been the publisher of his creator the late Michael Bond. Michael was an absolute genius at creating characters and his unforgettable stories of Paddington Bear have delighted generations of children. Michael Bond's Paddington Bear stories are marked by the author's deeply felt values of justice and tolerance, hope and optimism and infused with his infectious humour and joie de vivre. They are as relevant to readers today as they were when he first wrote them nearly sixty years ago. We look forward to the most joyful of literary celebrations across the nation as we mark 60 years of publishing Britain's most beloved Bear."

Karen Jankel, Michael Bond's daughter said: "Having been born exactly two months before the first book was published, Paddington has always been a part of my life and it is wonderful to think that my father's creation is giving pleasure to a new generation of readers sixty years later. Sadly, my father is no longer with us in person but I feel so fortunate that his spirit lives on through Paddington who is a very important member of our family and, I hope, will continue to be so for a long time to come."

Michael Bond

Michael Bond was born in Newbury, Berkshire, in January 1926. He served in both the Royal Air Force and the Middlesex Regiment of the British Army during the Second World War. He first began writing in 1945 when he was in the Army, selling his first short story to a magazine called *London Opinion* for seven guineas.



On Christmas Eve, 1956, while working as a BBC cameraman, Michael bought a small toy bear which had been left alone on a shelf in a London department store. Feeling sorry for it, he took it home and gave it to his wife. They lived near Paddington Station and Michael had often thought that Paddington would make a good name for a character.

One day he saw the bear sitting on the mantelpiece and it sparked an idea: "When I wrote those few words, I had no idea quite what a change they would eventually make to my life. It was really a case of putting something down on paper to get my brain working that morning." Michael soon found that he had a book on his hands, and in 1958 ***A Bear Called Paddington*** was published with many, many more stories to follow.

60 years later Paddington continues to touch the hearts of readers worldwide with his earnest good intentions and humorous misadventures. He is also the star of two blockbuster films –*Paddington*, which took \$280 million at the box office worldwide, and *Paddington 2*, released in November 2017, which was recently nominated for 3 BAFTAs.

Michael Bond was awarded the OBE in July 1997 and then a CBE in June 2015. Michael died in June 2017, leaving behind one of the great literary legacies of our time.

For media enquires please contact: Jo-Anna Parkinson: jo-anna.parkinson@harpercollins.co.uk OR Camilla Leask: camilla@willowpublicity.co.uk. World rights enquiries to Carla Alonzi, Head of Rights: carla.alonzi@harpercollins.co.uk

NOTES TO EDITORS:

- HarperCollins Children's Books, unprecedented three times winner of Children's Publisher of the Year (2014, 2015, 2016) is one of the leading publishers of children's books, recognised for nurturing new talent as well as boasting a reputable list of established best-selling authors. Respected worldwide for its tradition of publishing quality, award-winning books for young readers, HarperCollins is home to many children's classics, including *The Chronicles of Narnia*, the *Paddington* stories, *The Cat in the Hat* and *The Tiger Who Came to Tea*, and to some of the biggest names in children's literature past and present, including David Walliams, Judith Kerr, David Baddiel, Lauren Child, Oliver Jeffers and Michael Morpurgo
- HarperCollins UK is a division of HarperCollins Publishers, the second largest consumer book publisher in the world, with operations in 18 countries. With 200 years of history and more than 120 unique imprints around the world, HarperCollins' publish approximately 10,000 new books every year, in 17 languages, and has a print and digital catalogue of more than 200,000 titles. Writing across dozens of genres, HarperCollins authors include winners of the Nobel Prize, the Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Award, the Newbery and Caldecott Medals and the Man Booker Prize. HarperCollins UK has offices in London, Glasgow and Honley, and can be found online at www.harpercollins.co.uk. To explore HarperCollins' 200-year history, including a list of 200 iconic titles, fascinating stories and artefacts from the archive, visit www.hc.com/200.