

## Three Rivers at the North East Book Awards 2019

Four months of hard (but pleasurable) work came to an end on June 10<sup>th</sup> when thirty-nine Chantry and Newminster students and fifteen parents gathered at the Centre for Life to meet the authors whose work they had come to regard almost as 'old friends.'

A small group of us started reading and discussing possible contenders for the North East Book Award 2019 at Christmas, but the process was tricky as the books we liked best were less challenging than usual. For this reason, and because some of them were also quite short, we settled on six strong candidates instead of the usual five. In April, younger students came on board, eager to read and review the shortlist,

*Boy 87*      *Girl in the Window*    *The Closest Thing to Flying*      *A Darkness of Dragons*  
*She Wolf*      *Seaglass*

vote for their favourites and meet the authors.



Ele Fountain signing Lily's copy of Boy 87



Eloise Williams, author of Seaglass



Gill Lewis signing Rachel's copy of Closest Thing to flying

This year, we were privileged to be asked to present two of the four authors who were able to attend and our Year 6 students did us proud!



Left to right: authors Dan Smith, Eloise Williams, Ele Fountain and Gill Lewis

We warmed immediately to debut author, Ele Fountain. She is an articulate and engaging speaker who moved with her young family to Addis Ababa at the height of the refugee crisis. She felt a moral obligation to expose the impossible choices refugees have to face by helping readers see the situation through their eyes. To find out why we thought her book was so good, read our reviews on <http://www.nebookawards.org.uk/> Use the links to navigate to the shortlist.

Year 6 students: Eleanor and Lucy of Chantry and Maisie and Eva of Newminster were thrilled to be asked to present her and she was quite overwhelmed by what they had to say about her book.

Video clips will follow.

We first met author, Gill Lewis three years ago when she donned a gorilla suit to promote her book and shared the stage with a bemused Ross Welford and a hyper-active teacher. This time, she'd brought some flamboyant headgear – a tropical rainforest in a hat – and our students were very keen to try it on! To understand the connections between a hat and modern slavery; global extinctions and the origins of the RSPB, you'll just have to read the book. It covers a lot of ground!



That rainforest hat looks heavy!



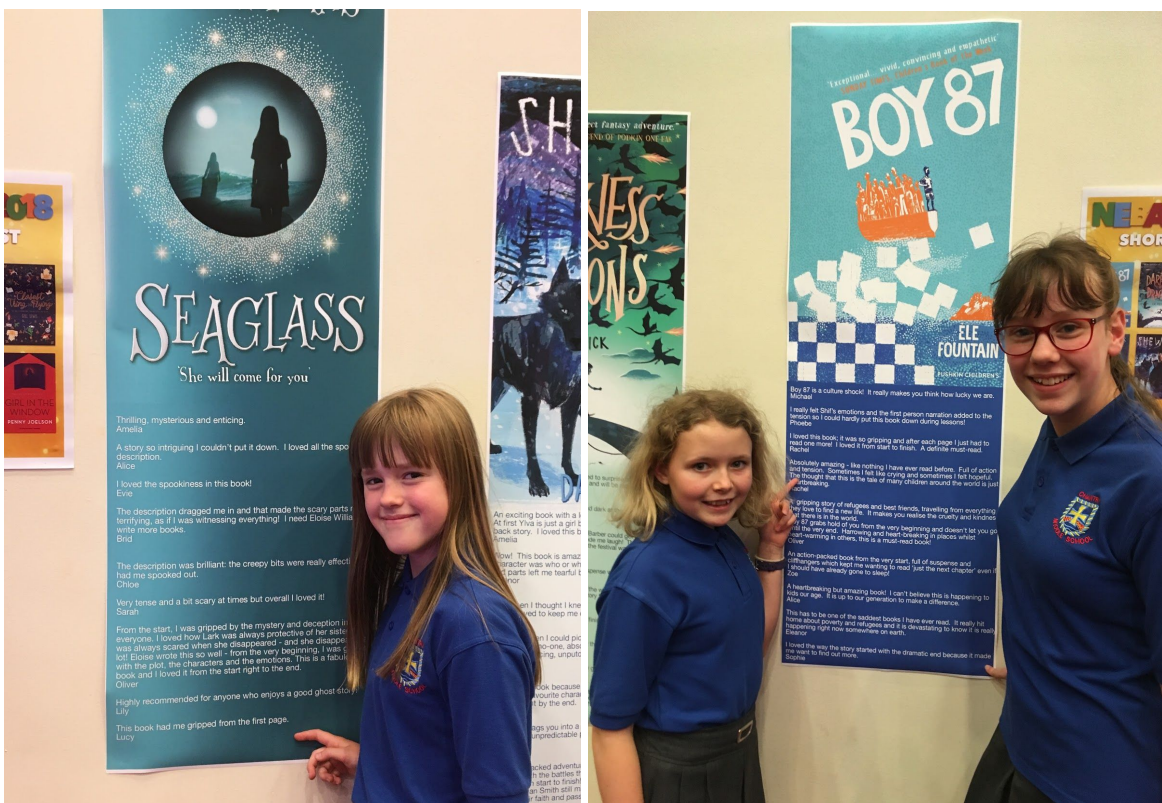
Well done to Gill's presenters, Year 6 students Amelia and Lily of Chantry and Lauren and Chloe of Newminster. Gill was obviously thrilled by what you had to say - and you said it beautifully!

Video clips will follow.

Sadly, this year's winner was unable to attend the ceremony for health reasons. She suffers from the same chronic fatigue syndrome as her central character and this prevents her from getting out and about. Everyone was very sad that she was unable to collect her well-deserved award.

Video clip will follow.

As usual, a lot of our comments were selected for the posters:





Although we all thought Penny Joelson's, *A Girl in the Window* was a deserving winner, we would have been quite satisfied *if any* of the first four had won, they were so good!