

Phil's new writing role

A WRITER from Pembrokeshire who worked as an actor in the first production by the Torch Theatre 40 years ago will be back in his home town this month to sign copies of his debut novel. Phil Rowlands was born and educated in Haverfordwest. He studied at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama in Cardiff and in 1977 was one of the founding members of the Torch Theatre Company in Milford Haven. But Phil also had a passion for telling stories as well as acting them out.

"I love telling stories. For a long time I worked as an actor in film, TV, radio and theatre. It tested, exhilarated, excited and terrified me all at the same time," he said.

When he decided to move into production and writing his experience as an actor was invaluable. "I wrote scripts and screenplays and found I could do it and, to my surprise, sell them," he said.

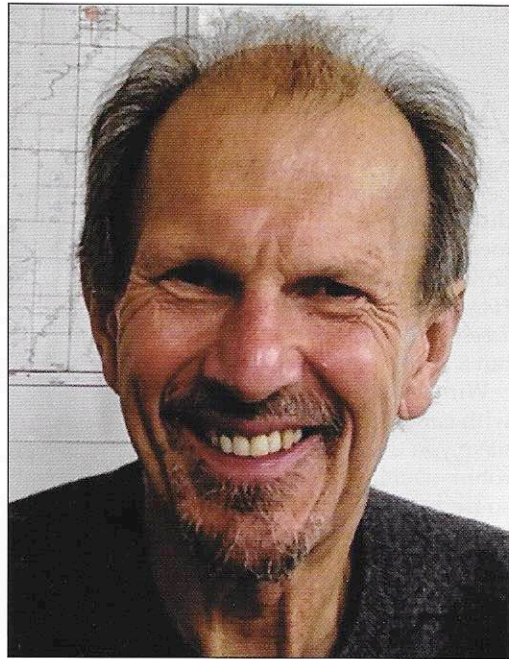
"Having been an actor, though, helped hone dialogue and structure."

When he arrives at Victoria Bookshop, Haverfordwest, on Friday, December 15, from 10am to noon, he will have a new role as he promotes his psychological thriller *Siena*.

"I had thought many times of writing a novel but was too frightened to start the lonely and long journey. *Siena* began as an idea for a film but it felt more suited to be a story in novel form. I have always been interested in the psychology of emotions and its fragile balance of opposites and by the resilience and diversity of the human spirit to face and overcome the seemingly impossible.

"In *Siena*, I wanted to explore grief and loss, as well as love and the need for retribution. Sara, the main character has to face the worst thing that could ever happen, happening; the unthinkable becoming a reality. It is her journey from desolation to hope that is the theme of the book. How she gets there, who helps or hinders along the way is the heart of the story."

Siena is published by Williams and Whiting at £8.99.



Author Phil Rowlands.

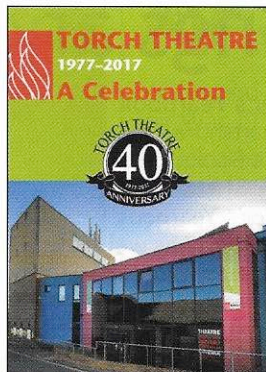
Celebrating 40 years of the Torch Theatre

A NEW book celebrating the 40th anniversary of Milford Haven's Torch Theatre is currently on sale and charts the history of what has become one of Pembrokeshire's best-loved cultural venues.

Author Helen Lewis John shares that love of the theatre and as well as being a keen supporter has now written a history of what began as a

controversial and financially challenged project, but one that continues to thrive at an artistic level.

Torch Theatre: A Celebration is available at Victoria Bookshop, Haverfordwest; Milford News, Milford Haven and the theatre itself at £6.50. Any profits from sales will go to Pembrokeshire Mind, a charity also supported by the theatre itself.



VICTORIA BOOKSHOP

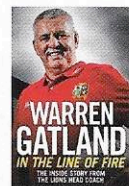
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