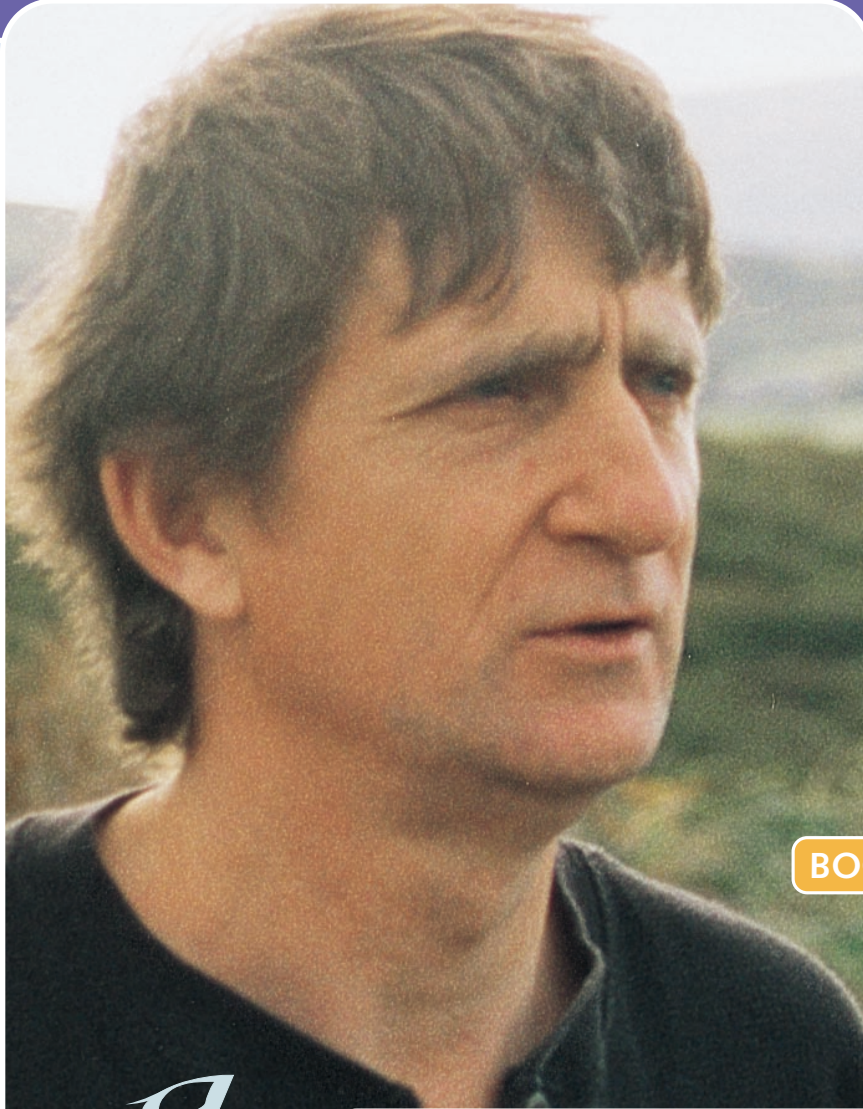


MEET AN AUTHOR

Malachy Doyle



gwales.com
Books on the Web



CYNGOR LLYFRAU CYMRU 2001

BOOKS

Owen and the Mountain

Bloomsbury Publishing Ltd sb £4.99 hb £9.99
(Shortlisted for the 2001 Tir na n-Og Award)

Owain a'r Mynydd

(Adapted by Myrddin ap Dafydd) Carreg Gwalch £4.50

The Changeling

(Legends from Wales series) Pont £3.95

Hero, Toffer and Wallaby

Pont Readalone £3.50

Georgie

(suitable for teenagers) Bloomsbury Publishing Ltd £5.99

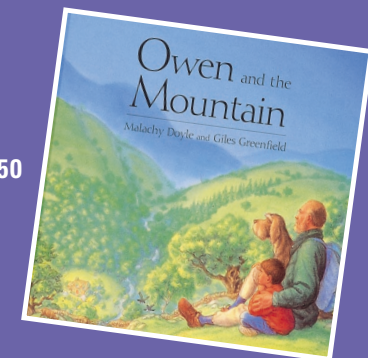
I grew up near Belfast, and moved to Wales in 1984 with Liz and our three children, Naomi, Hannah and Liam. We bought a smallholding near Aberaeron and I worked in special schools in Llanybydder and later in Dolgellau. It was while we were living in Machynlleth that I went to a creative writing evening class and decided to become a writer.

Stories poured out of me, and in three years I had over thirty books published. I now write for children of all ages, from pop-up books to teenage novels, and my work is available in sixteen different languages. My first book in Welsh, *Owain a'r Mynydd*, is a translation by Myrddin ap Dafydd of *Owen and the Mountain*, my picture book which

was shortlisted for the Tir na n-Og award.

Many of my books get their inspiration from folk tales and most are set in either Ireland or Wales. Other books with a Welsh connection are *The Changeling*, in the *Legends of Wales* series; *Hero, Toffer and Wallaby*, a Pont Readalone; *Georgie*, my first teenage novel, which draws on my experience of working in special schools, and *Trapped!*, in the *Oxford Reading Tree Treetops* series.

I now live in Aberdyfi, with Liz and my three cats, Celeste, Bracken and Little Milo. I think up my stories looking out at the sea, or walking in the hills, and one of the things I enjoy most is visiting schools and libraries all around Wales, meeting children and talking about books.



Find out more about Malachy and his books by looking at his website where you can also e-mail him with any questions and comments.

www.malachydoyle.co.uk

Name

Malachy Doyle

Date of Birth

June 30 1954

Where were you born and brought up?

I was born in Carrickfergus, in County Antrim, Northern Ireland, and brought up in Whitehead, four miles from there – it's a small seaside town at the mouth of Belfast Lough.

Where did you go to school?

My first school was Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School, Whitehead. You went to the top of our back garden, up some steps, and there it was.

My secondary school was in Belfast, and it was called Saint Malachy's College.

We shared the name because Saint Malachy was the patron saint of the area. My parents had recently moved up from Dublin, and I was the seventh child. They called me Malachy to bring a blessing on the family.

What did you particularly like and dislike about school?

One of the best things about primary school was going down to the bakery at break time to buy German biscuits for Miss Sharp and Mrs O'Donnell. The worst thing about secondary school was getting beaten by the teachers whenever the train was late.

What did you want to be, as a child?

I wanted to be on 'Top of the Pops', score the winning goal for Tottenham Hotspur in the F. A. Cup Final, and win a gold medal at the Olympics.

What was your favourite book as a child?

I loved fairy tales, and my favourite book was the *Orange Fairy Book*, by Andrew Lang.

**Do you have any hobbies?**

As a child I liked stamp-collecting, racing my toy cars round the house, playing football and reading. Now I like making up stories, walking in the hills and reading.

What makes you happy?

Hearing children laugh, writing good stories and living in Aberdyfi.

What makes you angry?

War and intolerance.

When did you start to write?

The year I was forty I went to a creative writing evening class in Ysgol Bro Ddyfi in Machynlleth. The tutor, Ms Anna Lunk, asked us to write about something from our childhood. I wrote a piece about my mother's button box. I enjoyed writing it, the tutor enjoyed reading it, and I thought, right, that's it, I'll become a writer. A writer for children.

Which was your first book?

The first story I wrote was called *Ravi and the Mountain*, about a little Indian boy and his grandfather climbing a mountain in the Himalayas.

Five years, and 187 drafts later, it was published as *Owen and the Mountain*, about a little Welsh boy and his grandfather climbing my favourite mountain, Cader Idris.

Do you find it easy to write?

What do you think?

Where do you write?

On a computer, in my study. It's a massive room, with a big window looking out to the sea.

From where do you get your ideas?

All over the place. From folk tales, from people I meet, from children in schools.

What advice would you give someone who is starting to write?

Read, read, read. Write, write, write.

Are some of your characters based on yourself?

I don't do it consciously but I suspect I'm in there somewhere, in just about everything I write. The grandfather in *Owen and the Mountain*, the teacher in *Georgie*, the goblin in *Hungry!*, *Hungry!*, *Hungry!*

Which of your books is your favourite?

Impossible to say. They're my babies, and I love them all. My favourite at any one time is usually the latest.

Which is your favourite character?

At the moment it's The Bold Boy in *The Bold Boy*.

Is there something you would like to change about yourself?

I wish I didn't bite my nails while I'm reading.

Which are your favourite television programmes?

I'm not a great telly watcher. I like *The Simpsons* and I like football, but I can only watch the small screen for about half an hour these days before I get bored.

What is your favourite food?

Fish, raspberries and chocolate ginger biscuits.

What makes you laugh?

Having my toes tickled.

