

Aspiring novelist Vanessa O’Loughlin wanted to polish up her writing skills but when she couldn’t find mum-friendly workshops she set up INKwell Writers’ Workshops

“I’ve been writing for 10 years, it all started when my husband Shane went sailing across the Atlantic for six weeks in 1998.

“I had an idea for a book and got bored watching TV in the evenings. I started writing longhand as I didn’t have a computer at home and stayed late in the office and went in at weekends to get it typed up. I was working in corporate event management.

“By the time Shane came back, I had the guts of a novel written and he bought me a computer for Christmas that year. Since then I’ve completed five full length novels and have partially written four more. I’m currently halfway through a thriller that I have a publisher interested in, and I’m trying to finish a romantic fiction novel – and I’ve had two children, Sophie (8), and Sam (almost 4)!

“I started INKwell Writers’ Workshops because I knew my own work needed improvement but as a mum of two young children, I couldn’t get away for weekend workshops or do an eight-week course at night.

“One-day workshops were what I needed but there were none, so I started organizing them myself two years ago, working when the kids go to bed at night. They suit people like me; there are a lot of mums who can’t get away at weekends or evenings. Among the bestselling authors who’ve been guest speakers at Inkwell are Sarah Webb, Paul Carson, Alex Barclay and Claudia Carroll to name just a few.

“Last year I had a short story published in Mum’s the Word, an anthology of stories about mothers and children. I also came third in the Seoige and O’Shea short story competition and had my story published in a book called Do the Write Thing and I came second in a Mills and Boon competition on Pat Kenny’s radio programme.

“I’ve also just been taken on by a major London agent whom I’m meeting this month, so it’s been a great year and the workshops are still going strong.”

There are limited places left on the Pure Fiction weekend, from September 19th to 22nd, for more log on to www.inkwellwriters.ie.



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