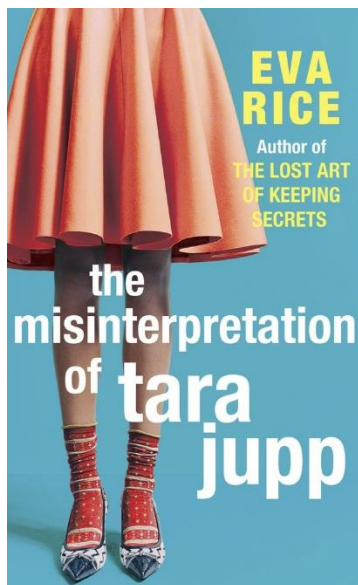


BOOK GROUP 2

MAY 2024

The Misinterpretation of Tara Jupp by Eva Rice



This book was written by Tim Rice's daughter, Eva Rice and is set in the post war era of the late fifties and early sixties accurately capturing the atmosphere of the swinging sixties and the enormous changes happening at that time. It is the story of Tara, a country vicar's daughter from Cornwall, whose talented voice and song writing abilities lead to her rise to fame from 10 to 17 years of age as a successful singer/songwriter.

In the beginning, Tara struggles coping with the image she is encouraged to portray and the characters surrounding her when she goes to London and is surrounded by the "sex, drugs and rock,n,roll" scene. She experiences a gamut of emotions – envy, love, hope and despair, guilt and redemption – all are cleverly captured with unsentimental but sympathetic, detailed observation and humour. We get a picture of the people who were around at that time (Brian Jones of the Rolling Stones is mentioned) and we see these characters through Tara's eyes.

In addition to the music scene at that time, Eva Rice also details examples of the "out with the old, in with the new" culture, threading the mass destruction of Victorian architecture skilfully through the story as streets of majestic old houses were knocked down to create new roads and modern buildings.

Although it is a long book, it is an easy read and a satisfying "rags to riches" tale although not all members of the group were in agreement, with some feeling that the ending was predictable from the beginning and it took far too long to be proven right with some abandoning the book halfway through!

Some comments from members:

"easy read but far too long and rambling"

"honest believable characters and accurate description of the era. Feelgood descriptions of Cornwall and a novel change to have so many optimistic folk, no real nasties. But the overall

story did not add up to very much and I lost interest before reaching the end.”

“I did not think I was going to enjoy this book when Tara met her fairytale prince in the first few pages. But I found Eva Rice such a good storyteller that she kept me turning the pages to the bitter end.”

“I thought all her characters were well portrayed and the plot had many twists and turns in the lives of most of the characters in the story.”

“As the story progressed, it became a good read for me.”

“I found it joyous, glorious, outrageous, romantic, over the top 60’s London. There were laugh out loud moments. I was a teenager in 60’s London before moving to Cornwall”

“The somewhat over-used “rags to riches” phrase comes to mind as Tara’s innocent singing is teased out into a full-blown career. Some nostalgic, even hysterical or historical diversions – references to Nickolaus Pevsner, Mary Quant, Cheyne walk, the mini skirt, hippies, Chelsea etc.....”

Christine Wright