

NORTHWEST NEWS AND FEATURES

New painting of the house where Swallows and Amazons writer lived

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A special painting by popular Lakes artist Nick Leigh has been commissioned to mark the 50th anniversary of the writer Arthur Ransome.

The painting shows the house, Hill Top, at Ealinghearth near Haverthwaite, where Ransome – the author of the children’s classic story *Swallows and Amazons* – spent his final years.

It was commissioned by Stephen and Janine Sykes who bought the house five years ago, and have since converted an adjoining barn into a luxury holiday cottage.

But parts of the house, including the entrance hall with its range fireplace, are almost unchanged since Ransome lived there with his Russian-born wife Evgenia.

The former farmhouse dates back to 1680 and lies in two acres of gardens and woodland overlooking the Rusland valley to the Coniston fells, where many of Ransome’s fictional adventures were set.



“We are great admirers of Nick’s work and so we were thrilled when he agreed to paint a picture of the house,” said Stephen.

Arthur Ransome died in June 1967 at Cheadle Royal Hospital, Cheshire after he became ill and Evgenia was unable to look after him.

Stephen and Janine, who have carried out considerable research into Ransome’s life and times at Hill Top, are supporting another Swallows and Amazons event this summer, the marathon reading of the story at Coniston in September, part of Visit England’s year of literary heroes programme, which is also included in the Lakes Culture calendar.

Nick’s painting has also been printed onto a limited edition set of mugs which Stephen and Janine are giving to their cottage guests as a souvenir.

Kendal-based Nick is foremost a landscape painter, whose work is inspired by the Cumbrian fells and other mountain areas, and by 1930s vintage posters. He’s a keen climber, fell-runner and traveller.

You can stay at Hill Top [cottage](#)

