



# The Keeping of Secrets

By Alice Graysharp

## PRESS RELEASE

*One young woman's life is torn apart by love, betrayal and clandestine work, in this striking novel set during World War Two and inspired by the author's family history.*

**What terrible power love bestows  
and what utter vulnerability it exposes**

Fifteen year old Patricia Roberts has been discouraged by her family from making any close friends for as long as she can remember. Living in Brixton, South London, her family has secrets, which must be protected at all costs. Illicit relationships and illegitimacy ruin reputations and hiding behind false respectability is everything. Pat's only safe companion is Bill, a friendship interrupted when Pat is evacuated with her school to Leatherhead in the Surrey countryside on the eve of the declaration of war. Away from London and the burden of her family's shadowy secrets, Pat discovers a new sense of freedom and dreams of teacher training, but growing up in an era when getting married costs a woman her teaching job, love is a distant prospect. Pat's first female friendship with fellow evacuee Becky will prove invaluable for both young women in the turbulent times ahead.

Christmas arrives and with it a maturer Bill, ready for more than friendship on Pat's return home for the holiday. As war rages on the continent in the Spring of 1940 Pat's mother is recruited to work at The Beaver Club for Canadian servicemen. And it is here a chance meeting with a Canadian airman, just days before her sixteenth birthday, will throw Pat's life into turmoil, and change the course of her future happiness forever. As the innocence of youth quickly fades, Pat ultimately has to decide whether to reveal her own deepest secret for the sake of a future of trust and love or to remain trapped in her own shadowy memories.

Alice Graysharp was inspired to research the remarkable wartime stories of her family after sitting down with her elderly mother to document the latter's memoir. Moved by the family's experiences of the Second World War, and the secret contributions her father made to the war effort, Alice's investigations took her to; Brixton, Leatherhead, Doncaster, Frinton-on-Sea and the former Lowercroft army camp's site in Lancashire, and brought her in contact with many kind and helpful people including the Old Girls' Association of St Martin-in-the-Fields. Weaving together the facts from her family history and world history into the tapestry of her own original narrative, Alice Graysharp has crafted an authentic coming-of-age story of infatuation, heartbreak and deceit, set against the tumultuous backdrop of evacuation, the Battle of Britain, the Blitz, buzz bombs and secret war work.

**About the author:** Born and raised in the Home Counties, Alice Graysharp has enjoyed a varied working life from hospitality to office work and retail. She currently lives in Surrey. This is her first novel, and the first title in a two book series, she is also already working on a seventeenth century trilogy. Published in the anniversary month of the outbreak of the Second World War and the Battle of Britain, **The Keeping of Secrets** (published by Clink Street Publishing 5<sup>th</sup> September 2017, RRP £9.99 paperback and £3.99 ebook) is available to buy online from retailers including [amazon.co.uk](http://amazon.co.uk) and can be ordered from all good bookstores. For more information visit <http://www.alicegraysharp.com>

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Kate Appleton, Senior Publicist at Authoright / 0207 993 4438 / [kate@authoright.com](mailto:kate@authoright.com)*