This year again I have been amazed and entertained by the wonderful entries from our young writers many who show a maturity in their writing that some adults struggle to achieve. This made my job a very hard one, and for those of you who weren’t successful this year do not be discouraged; judging other people’s writing is a very subjective task – another judge may have chosen completely different stories. I went with my heart and chose GHOSTS which I loved – I could really feel the pain and loneliness of the orphan and the writer portrayed the sense of being an outsider with great skill. This story also fulfilled the remit of the competition in excellent style. Some of the stories were well written but failed to do this and whilst it can be very difficult to stick to a given motif it is often necessary for a writer to be able to do this. The winner also encapsulated the medium of flash fiction definitively; there must be a beginning, a middle and an end which is coherent, and all of this must be achieved in so few words such that each sentence must work to push the story forward.

Special commendation must also go to THE WAGER which was wonderfully imaginative and hilariously funny - I loved the finishing sentence which is of critical importance in flash fiction, and WHERE BEIGE WAS BORN – again showing a depth of imagination and a wonderful wit.

Well done to all the young writers for giving me such an enjoyable job, and thank you to the SCC for giving me the honour.

Caroline Clough