Many authors find inspiration in their families, past or present. In this issue alone, Pippa Roberts explains how she’s writing a play about her grandmother Effie, a pioneering working-class female poet (p30). In Research Secrets (p60), Ana Johns relates how her father, a US sailor in WW2, would tell them about a woman he once loved in Japan; that anecdote led to a much bigger, more tragic story that formed the basis of her novel. And writer Alec Price (p18) came up with the idea for his children’s book while helping his granddaughter with her homework.

So have a think about the memorable characters and events you talk about with your nearest and dearest, and whether they could prompt new fiction or features. After all, family is something readers will always relate to.

Write soon, Carl