

Ripping Reads

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My 12 Best Books From Childhood (part 2) by Sue Hoggarth

M*ary Poppins* by PL Travers As a young child we spent a lot of holidays with my grandparents who lived near London and we were members of a really good library there with a big children's section. For many years I remembered my mother reading me a book about a family with a nanny who did all kinds of magical things with them. However, over the years, I had forgotten the name of the book and when I asked my mother about it, she didn't remember the one I was talking about. One day in 1962, when I was ten, we were looking at books in Boots and I joyfully came across a paperback book of *Mary Poppins* that had just been published and I immediately remembered it as being the book I had wondered about for years. I was thrilled and actually had enough money with me to buy it for the 3/6d that it cost then. Reading it was like going into a very special land of comfort and warmth as I reacquainted myself with the Banks family and their nanny. About a year later I made friends with a girl who told me that there were some more *Mary Poppins* books and over time I managed to get these ones as well. Later on in the 1960s everyone will know that Disney make the famous musical film of *Mary Poppins* and I very much looked forward to seeing it. Sadly, though, I was disappointed as so much had been changed. For instance, I was expecting there to be four children but John and Barbara (the twins) were missing and so was the later baby, Anabel. There was nothing in the book about Mrs. Banks being a suffragette and Mr. Banks seems a much better father than in the films. In the book we had stories about the Match Man and I don't recall him being called Bert or being a sweep, but it was he who went out to places with Mary Poppins. There was so much left out of the film, why did they need to add other things that weren't in the book? However, these are just my feelings and I am sure that many others will feel differently. The *Mary Poppins* books are a delight whatever your age.

