

LANSBURY KIDS' LINK TO MANSON

Angela Lansbury has told how she fled Hollywood after her teenage children got involved with Charles Manson's notorious "family" in the 1960s.



The Murder She Wrote star, 88, says Anthony and Deidre went off the rails and dabbled in drugs while she was away filming.

This led them to meet hippie cult leader Manson, later jailed for life for conspiracy to murder.

She said: "There were factions up in the hills above Malibu that were dedicated to deadly pursuits. Deidre was in with a crowd led by Charles Manson.

"He was an extraordinary character, charismatic in many ways, no question about it."

Angela and her husband Peter Shaw, who died in 2003,

VETERAN Angela decided to move the whole family to County Cork in Ireland.

She said: "It was somewhere my children wouldn't be exposed to any more bad influences.

"I refused all work for a year and simply kept house."

Her plan worked and both her children, now in their 60s, went to lead happy and successful lives.

Drivers on right road

Young drivers are being offered free advanced training in a bid to cut the number of road crashes and deaths.

Borders Council is one of the first in the UK to offer the scheme to 17-25 year olds.

Former touring car champion John Cleland will launch the scheme in Galashiels, Selkirkshire, on Tuesday.

Fyne result for foodies

A Scottish seafood trail has been named among the best for foodies.

Travel magazine said the seafood trail in Argyll was among the six best in Britain.

Venues praised by the magazine include the original Loch Fyne Oyster Bar at Cairndow and the Seafood Cabin at Skipness.

LAWYER TURNS AUTHOR AFTER FINDING SCHOOL JOTTER



This witch is called GObollina. She is dropping a mouse in her cauldron. I want to be an author when I grow up

Novel inspired by P2 ambition

As a six-year-old schoolgirl, Lucy Lawrie's dream was to become a famous writer like her heroes Roald Dahl and Enid Blyton.

In her primary two homework book, she declared, in very wobbly handwriting: "I want to be an author when I grow up."

But instead of following her childhood dream, Lucy chose a very different path, becoming a successful employment lawyer.

It was not until the mum-of-two discovered her dusty old school jotter tucked away in the back of a cupboard that she decided it was time to pick up a pen and fulfil the dreams of her six-year-old self.

Now, 31 years after revealing her aspiration to become an author, Lucy, 37, is celebrating the publication of her first novel - *Tiny Acts Of Love*.

The writer, from Loanhead, Edinburgh, is delighted with her writing debut, which tells the hilarious story of a first-time mum juggling marriage, work and motherhood.

Lucy - mum to Emily, eight, and Charlotte, four - said: "Chancing upon my dusty old jotter was one of the best things that could have happened.

"I realised that for years I had been ignoring my true passion and it was time to realise the dreams of my six-year-old self.

"I had just given birth to my first daughter Emily, which had changed my life beyond all recognition, and I decided my first novel had to be about the ups and downs of motherhood. I started jotting down ideas right then but it wasn't until my second daughter Charlotte was two that I started typing in earnest.

"It's taken me a year and a half but it's finally here. I'm really proud and hoping it is the first of many."

Tiny Acts Of Love tells the story of employment lawyer

Heather Greenaway

and new mum Cassie who discovers her over-excited husband has emailed a detailed account of her labour entitled *48 Stitches Later* with an attached photo to everyone in her contacts list - including clients.

Amid the mood swings, post-natal hypochondria, returning to work and side-effects of the email, Cassie struggles to hold it together and her husband does not seem to understand.

Lucy, who is married to lawyer Colin, 43, admits that, emotionally, the book is autobiographical but says all the events and characters are fictional.

The former Edinburgh Academy student said: "After having Emily, I felt like I had landed in a different world, where the stakes were high and a little person's survival depended totally on me.

"After my daughter was born, I was convinced she was going to die in the night as she looked so fragile.

"At first, when I took her out for a walk in the pram, I would stop every few yards and check if she was still breathing and, if a dog approached, I reacted as if it was a lion."

Lucy, who practised law for nine years, added: "When I became a mum, a friend told me that when you have a baby, a part of your heart starts living outside your body. I drew on all these emotions for the book and at the same time tried to capture the humour and fun of raising a young baby.

"Although Cassie's emotions are similar to mine, the characters and events are thankfully, in some cases, purely fictional."

She admits she would have died of embarrassment if someone had emailed the intimate details of her labour to everyone in her address book. Lucy, who met Colin

when they worked together at Edinburgh firm Dundas & Wilson, said: "I tried to think of the worst-case scenario for a new mum and came up with the idea of an email revealing the gruesome birth details, complete with photo, to everyone in her business directory.

"I would have been mortified if my husband had accidentally done that and would probably never have wanted to return to work.

"It is funny, though. Being a mum brings lots of laughter and hilarious moments you cannot put a price on."

Lucy, who as a teenager wrote novels about her holidays to GlenDoll, says her main characters Cassie and Jonathan have become good friends, who she talks and even writes letters to.

She said: "Although Cassie is not based on me, she is

“It's amazing what can spring from just one line written in an old jotter 30 years ago

very close to my heart. She has a difficult relationship with her mum and when I tried to bring the two of them together in the book it wasn't working.

"One day, I decided to write Cassie a letter, asking her about her mother. I put it in an envelope and left it overnight.

"The following morning, I was able to write the scenario I needed just because I treated the character like a real person."

She added: "Jonathan became a great friend. He was constantly making me laugh and it felt like he was telling me what to write.

"The subconscious is great. Characters become like the imaginary friends you had when you were little." Lucy,

WRITE NOTE Author Lucy with her daughters Charlotte, front, and Emily at their home last week

NEW CHAPTER Charlotte reads her mum's book and, left, Lucy as a girl. Top and below, her teen novels and old school jotters

whose dad Henry Marsh, 70, is a poet, added: "The book is also an exploration of what love is once you become a parent.

"When you have a child, you are so busy worrying about that very moment and getting everything right, you forget it's the tiny acts of love that really matter.

"True love spans a lifetime and is in your past and your future. I dedicated the book to my daughters and husband and, in a way, it's my love story to them."

Lucy studied English literature at Durham University before doing law at Edinburgh and admits her previous career helped in her quest to become an author.

She said: "After getting my English degree, I decided it would be sensible to get a career and chose law. It was a good move as it brought me back to Edinburgh and I met my husband.

"It also taught me great analytical skills, which have helped my writing. I haven't ruled out a return to law when my daughters are older but writing is my true passion.

"I've written the first draft of my second novel about a single Edinburgh mum and have several more ideas in my head, so we will just have to see how it goes."

Lucy, whose mum Jacquelyne, 65, and dad were both teachers at Edinburgh Academy, added: "It's amazing what can spring from just one line written in an old homework book 30 years ago."

■ *Tiny Acts Of Love* by Lucy Lawrie is published by Black & White, £7.99.

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