

PRESS RELEASE – EMBARGOED UNTIL 3<sup>rd</sup> MAY 2010

# Mills & Boon® gets into bed with the National Trust

## Romance publisher commissions novel to celebrate 400 years of National Trust property Ham House

This year leading romance publisher Mills & Boon have joined forces with the National Trust to produce a commemorative novel – ***Scandalous Innocent*** – in celebration of the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Ham House, one of the National Trust's most glamorous historic houses.

National Trust houses are alive with human history. In ***Scandalous Innocent***, author Juliet Landon draws on the romance of the property, situated on the bank of the Thames at Richmond, by weaving the stories of those who have lived in Ham House into the fictional life of enchanting heroine, Phoebe.

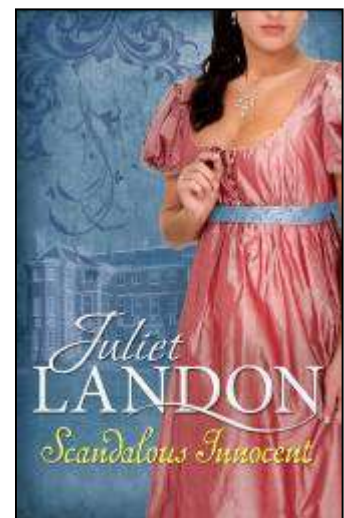
### This book brings together Mills & Boon and the National Trust, two bedfellows with a shared passion for the romance of history

Clare Somerville, Sales and Marketing Director of Mills & Boon says: 'From the gorgeous outfits and decadent settings, to the passionate – and occasionally scandalous – encounters, Mills & Boon Historicals capture the romantic essence of an era. ***Scandalous Innocent*** is brimming with sumptuous delights and we are thrilled with Juliet Landon's latest novel.'

John Stachiewicz, Publisher for the National Trust says: 'Based in Richmond, Mills & Boon is the closest publisher to Ham House, and thus the natural choice for what we all hope will be more than just a flirtation. We are delighted with ***Scandalous Innocent*** and look forward to a warm relationship with the nation's favourite romance publisher.'

### Love stories from the National Trust:

- There was scandal afoot at Dunham Massey in 1855, when the 7<sup>th</sup> Earl of Stamford fell in love with and married Catherine Cocks, a bareback rider in a circus act.
- Montacute House in Somerset received an injection of glamour in 1915, when former Viceroy of India - George Nathaniel Curzon – lived there with his mistress, the racy romantic fiction writer Elinor Glyn.
- At Plas Newydd in Wales, in the 1930s, Rex Whistler was commissioned to paint an 18-metre mural, into which he placed several coded messages revealing his love for daughter of the house, Caroline Paget.



**Mills & Boon will be donating 50p from each copy sold at National Trust properties to the National Trust, which is raising money for the restoration of rare silk hangings at Ham House.**

***Scandalous Innocent* is the story of two women, two generations apart, both on the brink of scandal...**

*Phoebe shared more than her unruly dark curls with the ancestor whose portrait graced the walls of Ham House. Impatient of convention, both had retreated from the excesses of London life to Richmond's leafy beauty.*

*Yet neither had enjoyed peace for long. Their retreat posed a challenge to Society's most notorious rakes - a certain Viscount Ransome seemed set on making Phoebe his own. But secrets and passion were part of the fabric of Ham House and Phoebe had learnt from her rebellious ancestor. She planned to bring the arrogant Viscount to his knees . . .*

***Scandalous Innocent* by Juliet Landon is published by Mills & Boon Historical on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2010, priced £6.99. It will be available from booksellers and also from selected National Trust properties including Ham House. *Scandalous Innocent* eBook available from [www.millsandboon.co.uk](http://www.millsandboon.co.uk)**

For more information, visit [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/millsandboon](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/millsandboon) (website live from 3rd May 2010)

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**Juliet Landon is available for interview.**

**Also available are Clare Somerville, Sales & Marketing Director for Mills & Boon,  
and John Stachiewicz, Publisher for the National Trust.**

**For interviews, review copies or more information, please contact:**

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**Notes to editors:**

**About Juliet Landon:**

Juliet Landon is a professional textile artist and author of embroidery books. Her abiding interest in history – which permeates her work in embroidery – led her to write historical fiction, and she has had over 20 books published by Mills & Boon. Extensive research and historical accuracy are key to Juliet's writing, and she often includes real places and people in her work to give added authenticity to the story. Juliet lives in Fleet, Hampshire and is President of the Basingstoke Branch of the Embroiderers' Guild.

**About Harlequin Mills & Boon Limited:**

Established in 1908, Harlequin Mills & Boon Ltd is the world's leading publisher of romantic fiction. Mills & Boon publish high quality, contemporary and entertaining women's fiction offering glamour and escapism to millions of readers across the globe. Mills & Boon publish 50 books each month and sell over 130 million copies worldwide every year. A Mills & Boon book is sold every 3 seconds in the UK.

Mills & Boon Historical ranges from medieval romance and Elizabethan passion; to Regency decadence and Victorian scandal. Find out more at: [www.millsandboon.co.uk](http://www.millsandboon.co.uk)

**About Ham House and Garden:**

Ham Street, Ham, Richmond-upon-Thames, Surrey.

Ham House and garden are an unusually complete survival of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Rich in history and atmosphere, Ham House was largely the creation of the charismatic Duchess of Lauderdale, who was deeply embroiled in the politics of the English Civil War and the restoration of the monarchy. The fine interiors and historic gardens make this an unusual and fascinating place to visit. Bonus material about the history of Ham House and its owners is included in *Scandalous Innocent*.

**About the National Trust:**

The National Trust cares for 300 inspiring historic houses and gardens across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. From former workers' cottages to iconic stately homes, from mines and mills to theatres and inns, the stories of people and their heritage are at the heart of everything it does. People of all ages, individuals, schools and communities, get involved each year with its projects, events and working holidays and over 56,000 volunteers help to bring the properties alive for the Trust's 3.8 million members. Find out more at: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk)