



# Trio of novels on village in a

By KYLE RITCHIE

INTEREST has been growing in the publishing world for a series of three completed novels with a Pennan theme.

The Monas Novels are written by village resident Glen Reynolds, who is a Franciscan communications adviser to the RC Bishop of Aberdeen, a libel lawyer, a military intelligence analyst and clinical hypnotherapist.

Despite approaches, the author is determined to hold out for Scottish literary representation and prefers the prospect of a long-term publisher based in Scotland.

The reasons for this decision may lie in the fact that behind the novels are extremely personal connections made in the books with himself, including both the passion he has for the village in which he now lives, and the rather clandestine details surrounding the author's own past.

"I want the deal to be good for the region as well as for me," he said.

There is some cause for optimism that a literary offer is in the making. Overnight the novels' Facebook page received nearly 17,000 likes and the website [www.themonasnovels.com](http://www.themonasnovels.com) accompanying the project has proved highly topical in light of recent news stories.

"The Monas novels all feature Pennan and nearby archaeological sites, plus places including Aberdeen and major global cities elsewhere, but the idea behind them is that they will hopefully form part of the growing literary and film interest being generated in the area," Mr Reynolds said.

"I want, as an author, to be part of the regeneration that is needed in the coastal villages of Aberdeenshire."

The contemporary setting of the novels combines religion, science and the paranormal, with a dash of modern day politics, all focusing on the prospect of global conflict over water.

The books have two unconventional main characters in a relationship that "will hopefully kick down the door of stereotypes and prejudice, as they involve a partnership and unfulfilled love of a Muslim Iranian woman and a Scottish priest born in Aberdeen", according to the author.

"Think Iranian woman with a shade of Amy Winehouse, and a Roman Catholic priest who is a Father Brown of the 21st century, and you have a clue as to their chemistry," he said.

Mr Reynolds has spent much time working abroad, including countries where radical Islam was on the move.

"I once witnessed a man being executed in Iran and stared into his eyes as the final death procession went past," he said. "You do not forget that."

"Nargess, the Iranian woman in the novels, is rescued from a similar fate of stoning. But an important point to grasp in these novels is that they do not portray an Islamic woman who makes concessions convenient to the western world.

"She is proud to wear her hijab, proud to call herself a Muslim and is proud to be a strong woman.

"In fact, she may well be the stronger of the two main characters. What she wants is the freedom to choose how she lives and dresses."

After moving to Pennan in 2007, Mr Reynolds and his wife raised a family in the village while he wrote

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