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## Wish You Were Here: The Official Biography of Douglas Adams

*By Nick Webb*



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**Wish You Were Here: The Official Biography of Douglas Adams** By Nick Webb

It all started when Douglas Adams demolished planet Earth in order to make way for an intergalactic expressway—and then invited everyone to thumb a ride on a comical cosmic road trip with the likes of Arthur Dent, Ford Prefect, and the other daft denizens of deep space immortalized in *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. Adams made the universe a much funnier place to inhabit and forever changed the way we think about towels, extraterrestrial poetry, and especially the number 42. And then, too soon, he was gone.

Just who was this impossibly tall Englishman who wedded science fiction and absurdist humor to create the multimillion-selling five-book “trilogy” that became a cult phenomenon read round the world? Even if you’ve dined in the Restaurant at the End of the Universe, you’ve been exposed to only a portion of the offbeat, endearing, and irresistible Adams mystique. Have you met the only official unofficial member of Monty Python’s Flying Circus? The very first person to purchase a Macintosh computer? The first (and thus far only) author to play a guitar solo onstage with Pink Floyd? Adams was also the writer so notorious for missing deadlines that he had to be held captive in a hotel room under the watchful eye of his editor; the creator of the epic computer game *Starship Titanic*; and a globetrotting wildlife crusader.

A longtime friend of the author, Nick Webb reveals many quirks and contradictions: Adams as the high-tech-gadget junkie and lavish gift giver . . . irrepressible ham and painfully timid soul . . . gregarious conversationalist and brooding depressive . . . brilliant intellect and prickly egotist. Into the brief span of forty-nine years, Douglas Adams exuberantly crammed more lives than the most resilient cat—while still finding time and energy to pursue whatever side projects captivated his ever-inquisitive mind.

By turns touching, tongue-in-cheek, and not at all timid about telling the warts-and-all truth, *Wish You Were Here* is summation as celebration— a look back at a life well worth the vicarious reliving, and studded with anecdote, droll comic incident, and heartfelt insight as its subject’s own unforgettable tales of cosmic wanderlust. For the countless fans of Douglas Adams and his unique and winsome world, here is a wonderful postcard: to be read, reread, and treasured for the memories it bears.

*From the Hardcover edition.*

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Webb was the editor at Britain's Pan Books who bought the book rights to Adams's *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* in 1978, back when it was a hit radio show on the BBC. While Webb didn't have much to do with Adams professionally after that, the two remained friendly until Adams's death, at age 49, in 2001, and that closeness pervades this authorized biography and its conversational tone. That doesn't mean the story is sugarcoated; Adams is occasionally chided for his emotional thickness, and Webb deals frankly with the consequences of his chronic slowness as a writer (one *Hitchhiker* novel was produced only when his editor, Sonny Mehta, booked a hotel room and sat with him as he turned out the pages). Another section addresses the thorny issue of who contributed what to the zany plot line of the radio series and how Adams's collaborator, John Lloyd, was nudged out of the book deal. For the most part, however, Webb genially celebrates Adams's comic talent and zest for life, aiming his account squarely at the large *Hitchhiker* fan base with occasional overtures to readers who don't necessarily know every nuance of the trilogy. It might be overstating matters to suggest that "before Douglas nobody had been *cosmically* funny," but Webb's tribute makes it easy to see why those who knew Adams admired him so greatly.

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From [Booklist](#)

Untimely death deprived sf of its reigning comic genius, Douglas Adams (1952-2001), celebrated as the author of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (1979) and its three sequels. After proving its popularity as a 1978 BBC radio series, the *Guide* became a novel thanks to a commission from Pan Books editor Nick Webb, who now gives us what is easily the best of several existing Adams biographies. Drawing on a wealth of Adams' papers and authorized interviews with family members, Webb creates a multifaceted rendering of a complex, charismatic man who was less writer than idea-spinner with a passionate interest in science. Eschewing strict chronology, Webb steps back and forth among seminal moments in Adams' life, from his days at the BBC, rubbing elbows with Monty Python cast members, to his final years in California, pitching the *Guide* to Hollywood. A fascinating, witty portrait of a cultural icon who deserves an audience even larger than the present horde of his buffs. *Carl Hays*

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Review

Praise for Wish You Were Here

"Webb's tale brims with affection and humour; every page is a delight."

—The Daily Mail

"It's perhaps the ultimate credit to Webb that he can be just as funny as Adams in his writing. With many of the same veins of humour that Adams had running throughout this biography, it's as if the great hitchhiker has never really left."

—The Leeds Guide

*From the Hardcover edition.*

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#### **Janet Steele:**

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#### **Carroll Boggess:**

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#### **Emmett Willett:**

Wish You Were Here: The Official Biography of Douglas Adams can be one of your starter books that are good idea. We all recommend that straight away because this e-book has good vocabulary that can increase your knowledge in terminology, easy to understand, bit entertaining but delivering the information. The copy writer giving his/her effort to set every word into enjoyment arrangement in writing Wish You Were Here: The Official Biography of Douglas Adams nevertheless doesn't forget the main stage, giving the reader the hottest and based confirm resource information that maybe you can be one of it. This great information can easily drawn you into fresh stage of crucial contemplating.

#### **May Davidson:**

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