

**About Apple:**

Apple Gidley, an Anglo-Australian author, whose life has been spent absorbing countries and cultures, considers herself a global nomad. She currently divides her time between Houston, Texas and St Croix, in the US Virgin Islands. She has moved 26 times, and has called twelve countries home (Papua New Guinea, Thailand, The Netherlands and nine others), and her experiences are described in her first book, *Expat Life Slice by Slice* (Summertime 2012).

Her roles have been varied - from magazine editor to intercultural trainer, from interior designer to Her Britannic Majesty's Honorary Consul. Now writing full time, Apple evocatively portrays peoples and places with empathy and humour, whether writing travel articles, blogs, short stories or full-length fiction. Her first novel, *Fireburn*, set in the Danish West Indies of the 1870s, will be launched on October 1st, 2017 (OC Publishing).

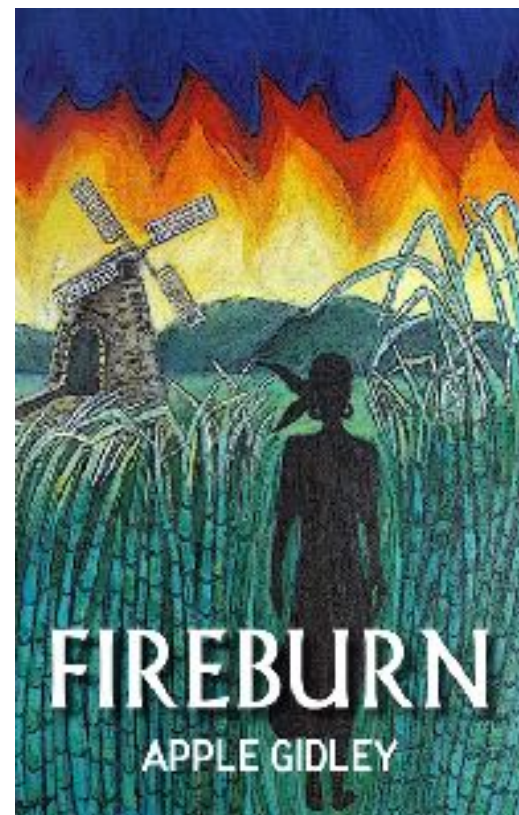
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**About *Fireburn***

The Danish-owned island of 1870s Saint Croix vibrates with passion and tension as Anna Clausen, a young Anglo-Danish woman, returns to her childhood home after her mother's death. Her heart sinks at what she finds on arrival. Her father is ailing and desolate and her beloved plantation, Anna's Fancy, that has been in the Clausen family for three generations, is in shambles.

The unwelcome lust of one man and forbidden love for another makes Anna's return to Saint Croix even more turbulent. Despite the decline in the sugar industry she is determined to retain Anna's Fancy but must first win the trust of her field workers, of Sampson, the foreman and the grudging respect of Emiline, the cook and local weed woman.

*Fireburn* tells the horrors of a little-known, bloody period of Caribbean history. Weathering personal heartache Anna survives the worker rebellion of 1878, 30 years after Emancipation, as she challenges the conventions of the day and faces hostility from the predominantly male landowners.



### **Praise for *Fireburn***

“Informed by impeccable research and infused with a deep curiosity and love for the beauty and complexity of the West Indies, *Fireburn* is at times shocking, at times deeply moving and always engaging. Historical fiction of the highest class.” **Matthew Parker, *The Sugar Barons***

Rich in description, *Fireburn* is a well-researched novel that shines a light on a historic period in St. Croix that has received little attention in literature until now.

**Gillian Royes, *The Goat Woman of Largo Bay***

*Fireburn* is available in print and ebook on Amazon.

### **Upcoming Author appearances / Book Signings:**

Tuesday 20th March - Neighborhood Book Club, Houston

Tuesday 27th March, Houston Writer’s Group

Monday 9th April - British Ladies Club Book Group, The Woodlands, Texas

Thursday, 24th October - International Connections of Houston Book Club #1

tbc - Barnes & Noble, Houston

tbd - St George’s Botanical Gardens, St Croix USVI

tbd - Papaya Cafe & Bookstore, St John, USVI

tbd - Serendipity Books, Tortola, British Virgin Islands

<http://www.applegidley.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/applegidleywriter>

Twitter @expatapple

Her blog *A Broad View* can be found at [www.applegidley.wordpress.com](http://www.applegidley.wordpress.com)

## **Author Q&A**

**Your first book *Expat Life Slice By Slice* (Summertime Publishing 2012) tells of your global life, your debut novel, *Fireburn*, is an historical novel set in the Danish West Indies. That's quite a leap! How did you make it?**

*A few years ago I was present at a Transfer Day Ceremony on St Croix, in the US Virgin Islands, and the speakers were talking about the upcoming 2017 centennial of the US purchase of the Danish West Indies. Mentioned also was *Fireburn*, sometimes known as *The Great Trashing*, an event that took place 30 years after Emancipation, and about which I knew nothing. My interest was piqued so away I went. And really, both books deal in some manner with expatriation.*

**What came first for *Fireburn*, the people or the plot?**

*They sort of meld together - I usually have one strong character and an idea of where I want to start - place and period for example - and a vague idea of the ending but am never quite sure how I'm going to get there. The characters do not always behave as I expect them too.*

**Why did you choose historical fiction as your genre? And specifically the issues facing those who expatriate.**

*Well, I love history and travel and different cultures, and they do say write what you know. The whole world has been on the move since time began - it's fascinating. Expatriate women are often much maligned. The term seems to conjure up indolent women snapping their fingers at servants and intent on handing off their children to nannies, ayahs, or amahs. But on the whole those women are a strong and adaptable breed who hold the family together through the often tumultuous time of packing up their lives and transporting them around the world.*

*History tells their stories, and I have had the privilege of knowing many such women, including my mother, who have managed multiple relocations with aplomb, leaving each posting having given back to the host country in some manner.*

**You came to writing quite late in life, why?**

*I dabbled for a long time, then a few years ago I was a keynote speaker at a Families in Global Transition conference and many people suggested I write my stories down. So I did, and *Expat Life Slice By Slice* was the result. Now I'm experiencing the joy and freedom of fiction.*

**What advice do you have for other writers?**

*Do it! You don't need a special place, or time. You do though need four things: curiosity, good observational skills, self-discipline and a thick skin.*

**Who are your favourite authors?**

*I have pretty eclectic tastes - but depending on my mood these writers never fail to delight: Somerset Maugham, Pico Iyer, William Boyd, Tan Twan Eng, Edwidge Danticat, Joanna Trollope, and I've recently discovered Andre Alexis.*

**What's next?**

*The characters in **Fireburn** have me hooked so I'm going to follow their stories which will take them up to the transfer from Denmark to the US. Hopefully it will be published in 2018. Then I'm jumping across the world and through a few decades for my next book. It is set in the jungles of Malaya during The Emergency of the 1950s and is a story I have been longing to write for years.*