Web Design Project Report

Higher Diploma in Science in Computing/Higher Diploma in Science in Web Technologies

Jane Park - Author

<https://pablotarga.github.io/nci-web-design-project-1/>

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Team and Participants

Project Group Team: Group C.

Participants in Alphabetical Order:

* Liz Bourke/19149310
* Kevin Higgins/ 19178298
* Cathal Kavanagh/ 19182121
* Pablo Targa/ 19183500

# Links

**Code on Github:**

https://github.com/pablotarga/nci-web-design-project-1/tree/dev

**Deployed:**

https://pablotarga.github.io/nci-web-design-project-1/

# Summary

We designed our website around the following pitch:

"Jane Park[[1]](#footnote-1) is a debut novelist who is launching her first epic fantasy novel, called PROTECTORS OF THE NORTH. (He's a fiendish coffee-fuelled assassin who must take medication to keep him sane. She's a hard-bitten motormouth college professor from a secret island of warrior women. Together, they fight dragons!)

Her publisher has decided to provide her with a website. The audience for the website is a reader of epic fantasy who may or may not be previously familiar with Jane Park and her work."

The primary purpose of the website is to promote Jane's first book. Its seconday purpose is to promote Jane's brand as an author. To this end, it needs to include:

* information about the book to encourage people to buy it, and
* information about Jane in order to promote interest in her and any future work she produces.

The main audience for the website are existing readers of epic fantasy to whom Jane and her publisher are advertising Jane herself and her book. As a former scientist and polar explorer, and current medieval re-enactor, Jane is something of a polymath, and her personal brand should appeal to a wide range of people. The book is expected to have crossover appeal to a YA (Young Adult) readership, and therefore the website needs to be family-friendly. The audience is assumed to be moderately tech-savvy. The website design should make it easy for the audience to:

* find information about the book,
* find links to vendors of the book,
* find relevant information about Jane, and
* find out if Jane will be appearing at a bookshop or book festival near them in order to promote her book in person.

Jane's podcasts are both diverse -- covering every topic from the possible effects of tropic cascade on an island ecosystem to the perfect way to make hot chocolate -- and popular. It is therefore advisable to have a link to them on her website. Links to Jane's short stories provide the potential buyer of her debut novel with a chance to "try before buying," and are therefore additional publicity material.

Foreign (non-English-language) publication rights to *Protectors of the North* have not yet been sold, so there is no sales benefit to having multilingual functionality for Jane's website.

Design

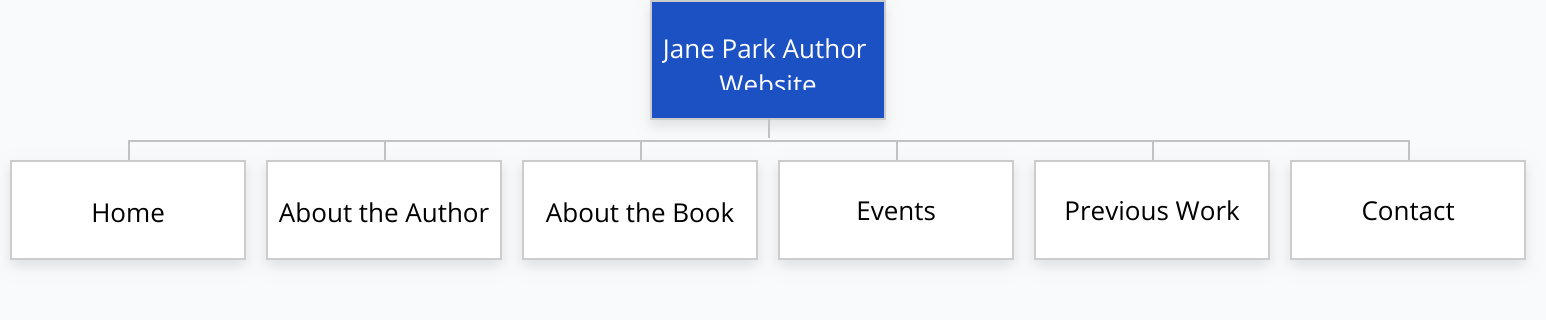
## Initial Design Process:

We decided that the website would need to include at least the following pages:

* Home: with brief information both about book and author, and buy links;
* Book: with detailed information about the book, testimonials/quotes from respected review outlets, link to 1st chapter;
* About the Author: with relevant information about the author;
* Previous Work: with information about and links to other things the author has done, such as short stories, that might convince a reader to buy the book;
* News: with updates about the author in blog form, information about events the author will be participating in, etc;
* Contact: with a form to contact Jane.

We consulted with readers and professional writers[[2]](#footnote-2) of epic fantasy for what they like to see in a website, and from this brief survey developed a simple pencil sitemap:

## Sitemap:



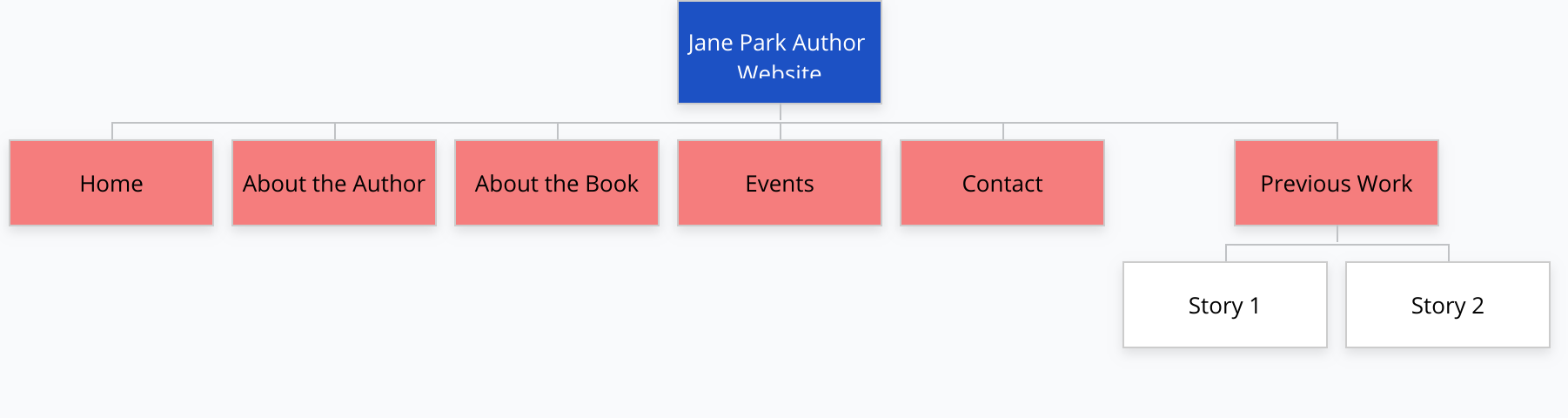
## Early Wireframes:

We then developed some early wireframes:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Table 1: Early Wireframes | |
| A screenshot of a cell phone  Description automatically generated |  |
|  | |
| A close up of text on a whiteboard  Description automatically generated | A screenshot of a cell phone  Description automatically generated |

After some consultation and discussion, we very quickly decided to replace the News page with an Events page, since we decided that Jane Park wouldn't be a regular updater. We also decided on some other changes, like linking to sub-pages from the Previous Work page.

## Final Sitemap:



## 

## Final Design and Homepage View:

The final design is based on the earlier wireframes, but aims for improved ease of navigation and for consistency of design across all six pages. You can see in the table below screenshots of the Home and Author pages.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Table 2: Comparison Views of Final Wireframe, Live Home and Author Pages. | |
|  | |
|  | |
|  |  |

Development and Features

## Feature 1: Events Page Date Picker with JSON

We developed a dynamically-generated Events page to inform users of Jane Park’s appearances at literary festivals and events. Researching competitor authors’ pages, we noticed that they typically had only a handful of upcoming events. A design was therefore chosen that shows all events with a date later than the current date, on page load. Past events can be viewed by choosing an earlier date in the date picker, which is a popular Javascript library released under the MIT licence called Pikaday. All other functionality was coded from scratch. The aim was to provide information of interest to users with a minimum of clicks, displaying the location, address, poster, and an external link for all future events straight away.

The design provides convenience to the content creator. Events are added as text attributes of a JSON array object. The page-generation code sorts the loaded events by date so they can be appended to the JSON file by the content creator in any order.

## Feature 2: Text-Based Game

We developed a short text-based game (using vanilla JavaScript) that launches on the click of a button on the about-the-book page. The game as it is essentially parodies epic fantasy, but the idea behind having a game is to build reader interest and investment in the product (that is, the world of the story). The game has several exit conditions, but we implement a victory condition that relies on the user's choices and on a random number generation. If the results of the user's choices (the risk variable) and the result of the random number generation (the bonus variable) are greater than a given figure, the user wins the game.

## Feature 3: Countdown Banner

We developed a Countdown feature, to be displayed on the home page and the about-the-book page. This feature counts down to the publication day in real time, letting a reader know just how long they have to wait. It is implemented using jQuery.

## Feature 4: Responsive Design

We designed the website to be equally navigable in mobile and desktop view.

Teamwork

At the initial stage of development we all worked together to develop a pitch and generate a general design sensibility. As we began to build the pages, we divided up the work based on our priorities and respective experience.

Pablo: As the team member with greatest experience in web development, Pablotook responsibility for ensuring consistency in our shared CSS stylesheet, ui-kit.css (the UI Kit), for creating many of the styles, and refining more. Pablo also developed the Home page and the Countdown.js script (shared across the home page and the about-the-book page) as well as mentoring team members with less experience as they developed their own JavaScript scripts and CSS styles. Pablo also collaborated on the Contact page, developing the styles for the form.

Kevin took responsibility for developing the Events page, building a page-generation feature in plain JavaScript that builds HTML using data from a JSON file according to a user-chosen date. He created poster graphics for ten events. He created text content for the Events page and contributed to the Author page. Kevin maintained a Google Doc of notes from all team meetings, and drew the final wireframes for all pages in Balsamiq. Kevin also did significant work in developing a harmonious colour scheme and developed the basic card design including an interlaced border graphic. Kevin helped unify CSS styles across the pages, leaving his fingerprints on final card, nav and footer margins, use of nested cards, form highlighting and special text styles. He also ensured all necessary alt text was in place.

Cathaltook responsibility for developing the Previous Work page, creating content and building the sub-pages with links to stories.

Lizdeveloped much of the written content for the Home, Book, and Author pages. Liz also took responsibility for developing the Author and Book pages, as these were relatively straightforward in implementation; collaborated with Pablo on the Contact page; contributed to the development of styles, particularly for the footer element; and built two vanilla JavaScript scripts for the Book page: one to play audio and one to generate a simple text-based game with a random number element. Liz also worked on formatting the Project Report.

Deployment

We deployed to GitHub pages because we aren't launching a real-world debut author and their novel. Our only server-side requirements were to capture information from a form, and we used Formspree's free service for them. We deployed our website from our dev GitHub branch, and redeployed several times as we improved feature functionality.

Validation

We validated our final code through <http://validator.w3.org/> and <http://jigsaw.w3.org/css-validator/>.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Table 3: Validation Screenshots | |
|  | Author page validation screenshot. |
|  | Book page validation screenshot. |
|  | Contact page validation screenshot. |
|  | Short story page validation screenshot. |
|  | Events page validation screenshot. |
|  | Home page validation screenshot. |
|  | UI kit validation screenshot. |
|  | Story 1 validation screenshot. |
|  | Story 2 validation screenshot. |
|  | Pablo CSS validation screenshot. |
|  | Bourke CSS validation screenshot. |
|  | CSS validation screenshot. |
|  | Kevin.css CSS validation screenshot |

1. Not a real person. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Liz can provide references if required. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)