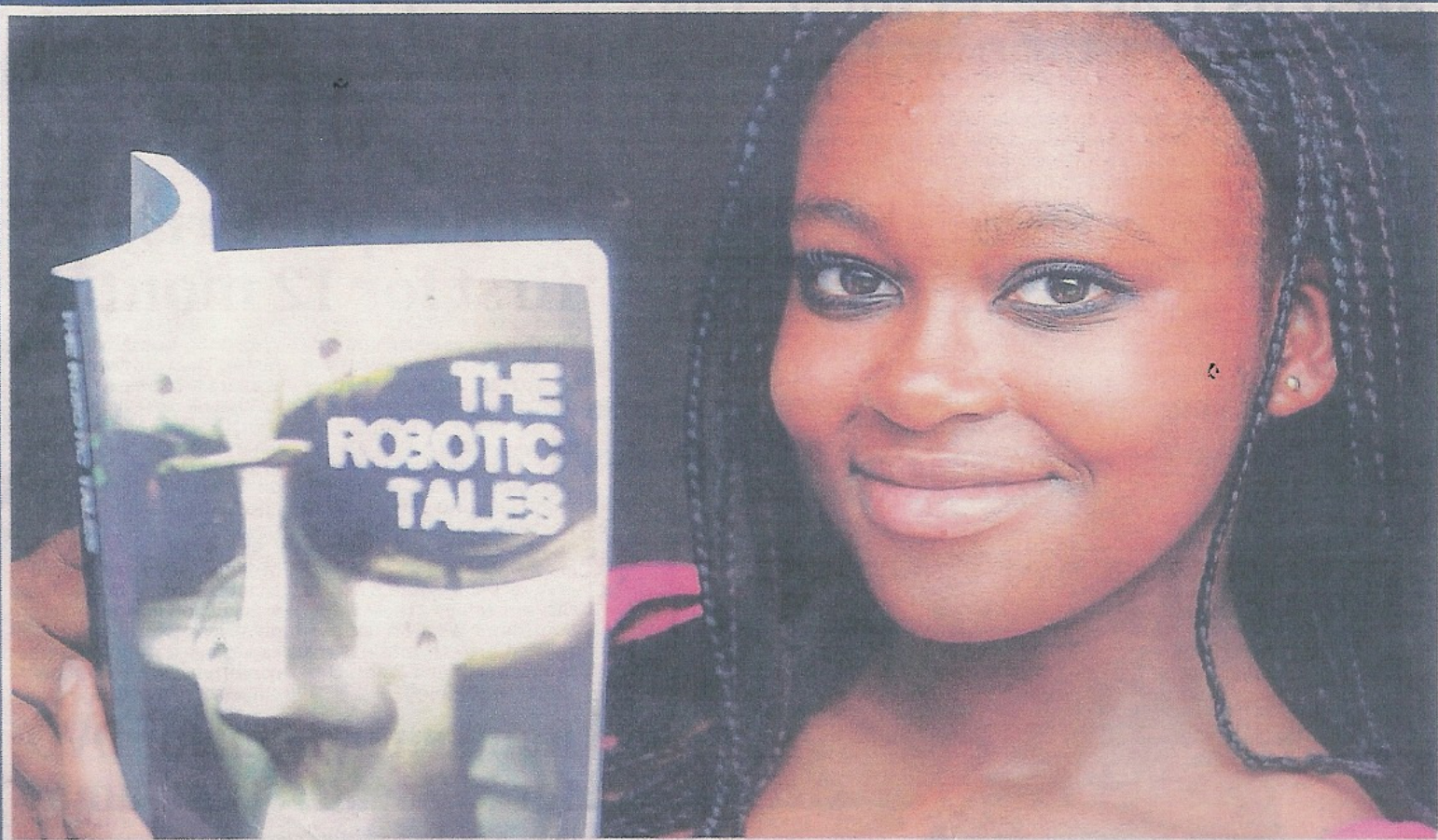


PICTURE: TONY WOOD

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Teenage author has write idea for future

by REBECCA EVANS

SHE plays the violin, competes in the high jump and took her Spanish GCSE two years early.

But now one talented teenager has surpassed those achievements by setting up her own company to publish her first novel – aged just 14.

Where most teenagers would rather watch television or play computer games rather than pick up a book, Natalie Igharo has spent the past two years putting the finishing touches to her novel, *The Robotic Tales*.

Natalie, of Windmill Platt, Handcross, near Haywards Heath, said: "I enjoy writing and it was fun so I made time to finish it."

"I like the freedom of making up whatever you want and being able to control it."

Set in Russia in 2055, *The Robotic Tales* tells the story of a group of child spies, who try to rescue the world from the tyrannical robot, Klikko.

The vision of a robot-run future has parallels with some of Natalie's favourite books.

She said: "George Orwell is my favourite author. I love 1984 because it

THE earliest known young author was **Francis Hawkins**.

In 1641, aged eight, he wrote *Youth Behaviour*, a book about manners and etiquette for children.

One of the best-known child authors was **Anne Frank**, pictured. Though her diary was not written to be published, it is one of the most widely read titles in the world and has been translated into more than 50 languages.

Brighton-born **Gailtin Moran**, a TV critic and columnist at *The Times*, wrote a novel called *The Chronicles of Narmo*, aged 16.



is so shocking. But my favourite book is *Harry Potter And The Philosopher's Stone* because it is so well written."

Natalie, who attends St Paul's Catholic College in Jane Murray Way, Burgess Hill, was forced to set up her own publishing company to release

the book after a number of companies rejected it. Natalie and her father, Monday, have had 100 copies of the novel printed and have been touring Sussex schools to drum up support.

Natalie said: "I sent it to lots of publishers but they all said they couldn't sign a contract with a child. We looked into self-publishing companies but they charged about £8,000 so we decided to print the book ourselves."

Her mother, Philomena, and siblings Matthew, eight, and Charlotte, 12, are proud of what she has achieved.

But Natalie admits she gets nervous when other people read her book.

She said: "My brother and sister like it but I get a bit worried when people read my book, especially if I know them. My friends think it's cool and a few of them have bought copies."

The teenager will not be having a break during the summer holidays, because she has already begun work on a sequel.

She said: "I hope to get a lot of it done by the end of the holidays."

To buy a copy of *The Robotic Tales*, visit www.windmillplattpublishing.co.uk

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