



## The Friends of Highgate Library

# NEWSLETTER SPRING 2019

### Highgate Library News

As the Spring arrives, we are feeling very optimistic. Our events are attracting even bigger audiences, more people are being reached through our regular emails and through our social media pages and paper copies of our newsletters disappear at every event. We are attracting some very interesting speakers who say they enjoy coming and the lively audiences they meet.

Our library itself is well regarded and will be the first in Camden to benefit from major investment in its computers and IT systems. This is good news as our current equipment is very dated and often unreliable. We are being asked for imaginative ideas beyond basic upgrades, for example using robotics and virtual reality. Watch this space and give us your ideas!

For our March event we are delighted to have Jessica Hepburn tell us about her life and experience interviewing inspiring women about motherhood and then swimming the Channel! All our keen Pond swimmers should come to this one.

As a follow up to our very popular January talk by Grace Livingstone on events in Chile and Argentina in the 1970s, we are showing the highly regarded documentary Nae Pasaran! as an extra event on March 19th. Details of all forthcoming events inside and in our new events brochure which is included with this Newsletter.

Our AGM is on April 11th. Before the talk by Martin Wilkinson, there will be a short business meeting with reports on the year's work. This meeting includes elections to the Committee. Current officers and committee are listed on the last page. Nominations to the Committee are welcome. You can do this by emailing us at FOHL@dartmouthpark.org or in person at the AGM.

This is the time to renew your membership and you will find a form inside. You can now renew online by bank transfer, details on the form. We are still very good value at just £6 and of course we welcome your donations. Our paper newsletters, postage and printed posters all need to be paid for.

As always, we welcome you to join us as volunteers to work in the library, to manage the hall or to join our committee to plan and run events. Just come and talk to any committee member at an event or contact us by email or through our website.

*Linda Lefevre, Chair*

## Things to Come

**Thursday March 14th 7.30pm**      **Jessica Hepburn**      **21 Miles**

*"When my life didn't go to plan, I ate and I swam. This is the story of how I met and ate with 21 inspirational women and then swam 21 miles in search of the answer to the question: 'Does motherhood make you happy?'"*

After a decade of trying to become a mother Jessica knew it was time to do something different. So, she decided to swim the twenty-one miles across the English Channel – no easy feat, especially for someone who couldn't swim very well. This led to another idea: what if she wrote to a collection of inspiring women, asking if they would meet her to answer the question: does motherhood make you happy? The response was overwhelming. From baronesses and professors, amazing women from different walks of life – some mothers, some not – all with compelling truths to tell about female fulfilment and the meaning of motherhood. In 2015, Jessica set out in the dark, taking the words that each of the women had given to sea in her bid to answer the question.

**Tuesday March 19th Film**      ***Nae Pasaran!***

With unprecedented access and research, ***NAE PASARAN!*** reveals for the first time the incredible impact made by Scottish factory workers 40 years ago against one of the most repressive dictatorships of the 20th century. 40 years after their defiant stand in protest against Pinochet's Air Force in Chile, Scottish pensioners discover the dramatic consequences of their solidarity

**Thursday April 11<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm**      **AGM and Martin Wilkinson**      **'How inequality harms our health, our society, and the Earth'.**

In ***The Spirit Level*** the authors put inequality at the centre of public debate. ***The Inner Level*** explains how inequality affects us individually, how it alters how we think, feel and behave. It sets out the overwhelming evidence that material inequities have powerful psychological effects. It shows how the levels of inequality found in Britain today lead to anxiety, mental illness, and the consumerism that is wrecking the living world. Martin will take us through this fascinating research.

**Thursday May 9<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm**      **Salley Vickers**      ***The Librarian***

A charmingly subversive novel about a library in 1950s England, by the acclaimed author of *The Cleaner of Chartres and Cousins*. Sylvia Blackwell, a young woman in her twenties, moves to East Mole, a quaint market town in middle England, to start a new job as a children's librarian. Come and meet Salley as she talks about this book and her passion for libraries with David Drake.

**Thursday June 13th 7.30pm**      **Ian Dungavel**      **Highgate Cemetery in archive images**

This illustrated talk by Ian will be accompanied by an exhibition of images in the Civic and Cultural Centre Hall. Details in our summer newsletter.

## Recent Events

### **Thursday December 13th Seasonal Words and Music**

We had a variety of entertainment for our annual Celebration. To start things off, Mary Maddison and the Moving Chamber Choir sang seasonal music to get us into the Christmas spirit. This was followed by actress Corinna Marlowe who read movingly a pot-pourri of poetry and prose by writers who had lived or worked locally. Finally, Oliver Lewis and Robert West sang and played blues music. Festive snacks and mulled wine were offered and a good time was had by all.

### **Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2019 7.30pm Grace Livingstone**

#### **Britain and the Dictatorships of Argentina and Chile, 1973-82**

On 10th January 2019 the hall was filled to capacity when Grace Livingstone gave us a talk about the British government policy towards the dictatorships of Chile and Argentina between 1973-82. Grace unearthed information that was unavailable up to now and one of the shocking details discovered was how many of the documents have been destroyed by unknown individuals. We were shown examples how the old-boy-network supported the dictatorships with no regard to human rights issues. The priority of the British government of the day was to represent the interest of big businesses like the oil and arms industries. The presentation was informative and left one in a sombre mood.

### **Thursday February 14<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm Rachel Malik Miss Boston and Miss Hargreaves**

A fascinated audience listened to Rachel describing how the novel came about. It was based on what she discovered about her grandmother, the Miss Hargreaves of the title. Since many had read the book, this was a skilful presentation of the book's creation, giving no spoilers for those still to enjoy it. There are two copies in our library if you are one of them!

## **Highgate Library Civic and Cultural Centre**

Our hall continues to be popular for a wide range of community users. It is perfect for meetings of up to 80 people and for seminars and dance and exercise classes.

Please tell your friends about it. Full details on the HLCCC website [www.dartmouthpark.org/FOHL/HLCCC-childrens-corner](http://www.dartmouthpark.org/FOHL/HLCCC-childrens-corner). All enquiries to [FOHL@dartmouthpark.org](mailto:FOHL@dartmouthpark.org).

### **Keeping in touch.**

We use email to send urgent messages and reminders of events so please ensure that we have your up to date email address. Ours is [FOHL@dartmouthpark.org](mailto:FOHL@dartmouthpark.org) and you can email us with comments too. Please add us to your email address book

# News from the Library

## **Sarah Harrison, the FoHL Volunteer Coordinator gives news from Highgate Library**

Highgate Library's annual figures for "visits" and "issues" both show a fairly small decline on the previous year's figures – 3% for the former, 9% for the latter. This is less good than the figures for some of Camden's libraries but better than for others. What is interesting is that the figures for the last quarter (October-December) are in both cases more positive – only 1% decline in "visits", and no change in the number of "issues" from the previous year. It is not clear why this is: perhaps my plea to members to use the library and to borrow more books did not fall on deaf ears!

The annual figure for "enrolments" saw a very significant drop (39%), though again the last quarter was improving, with only a 10% drop on the previous year. We think that this is in part at least due to the halting of the regular visits from Brookfield Primary School when all those children who were not already members were invited to become members of the library. The figures for PC use follow the pattern of decreasing numbers, but no more than other libraries.

The statistics for this year's Children's Summer Reading Scheme again show a decline from last year's figures. This year of the 90 children who enrolled (44 boys, 46 girls) 29 completed the scheme (32%) compared with the previous year when 42% of the 110 children who enrolled completed. It is impossible to know whether this year's theme of Mischief Makers appealed less, or it is part of a general trend. However, it is clear that these numbers do not reflect the pleasure that the Reading Challenge brings to many of the children who take part.

Finally, we collect figures for the number of hours that FOHL volunteers spend keeping the Library open and functioning well.

Last year these amounted to over 3500 hours, with several of the 34 Library volunteers contributing over 150 hours of their time. We should all be very proud of this record, though we should not forget the crucial role of the Camden library staff.

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### **FRIENDS OF HIGHGATE LIBRARY**

c/o Highgate Library, Chester Road, N19 5DH

Chair: Linda Lefevre

Vice Chair & Membership: Sarah Carrier

Hon. Secretary: Margot Kafno

Hon. Treasurer: Patrick Lefevre

Committee: Michele Cohen, Agnes Stewart, Paul Harris

Sarah Harrison, Ann Cheyne & Virginia Kerridge

President: Sue Perkins

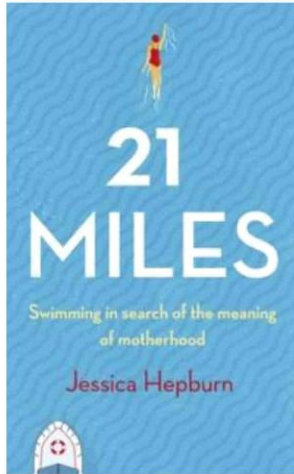
Patrons: Julian Barnes, Joanna Briscoe, Tracy Chevalier, Hunter Davies, Caitlin Davies, John Harvey, & Charlotte Mendelson

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# Friends of Highgate Library Spring 2019 Programme

The Friends of Highgate Library present  
**Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2019**  
7.15 for 7.30pm

**Jessica Hepburn**  
**21 Miles**



After a decade of trying to become a mother Jessica knew it was time to do something different. So, she decided to swim the twenty-one miles across the English Channel – no easy feat, especially for someone who couldn't swim very well. This led to another idea: what if she wrote to 21 inspiring women, asking if they would meet her to answer the question: does motherhood make you happy? The response was overwhelming. From baronesses and professors, she talked to amazing women with compelling truths to tell about female fulfilment and the meaning of motherhood.

**Highgate Library Civic and Cultural Centre**  
**in The Children's Corner, Croftdown Road, NW5 1HB**

[www.dartmouthpark.org/FOHL/events](http://www.dartmouthpark.org/FOHL/events)

Admission Free

The Friends of Highgate Library present  
Tuesday 19th<sup>th</sup> March 2019  
7.15 for 7.30pm



Following our very popular talk in January on Latin American politics in the 1970s, The Friends are pleased to present this film.

With unprecedented access and research, NAE PASARAN reveals for the first time the incredible impact made by Scottish factory workers 40 years ago against one of the most repressive dictatorships of the 20th century. 40 years after their defiant stand in protest against Pinochet's Air Force in Chile, Scottish pensioners discover the dramatic consequences of their solidarity.

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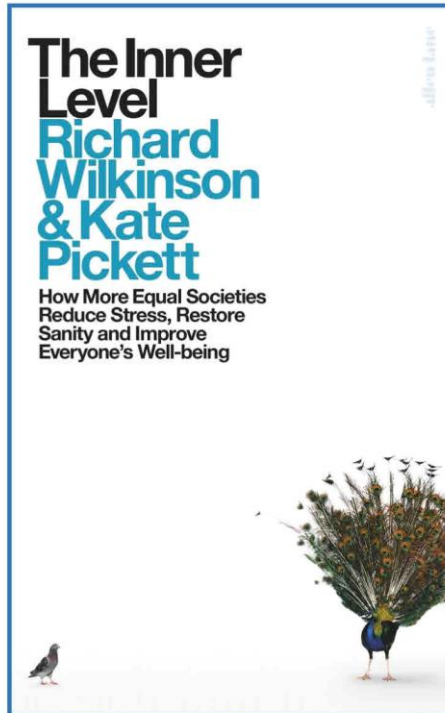
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**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2019**

7.15 for 7.30pm

Annual General Meeting followed by  
**Martin Wilkinson The Inner Level**



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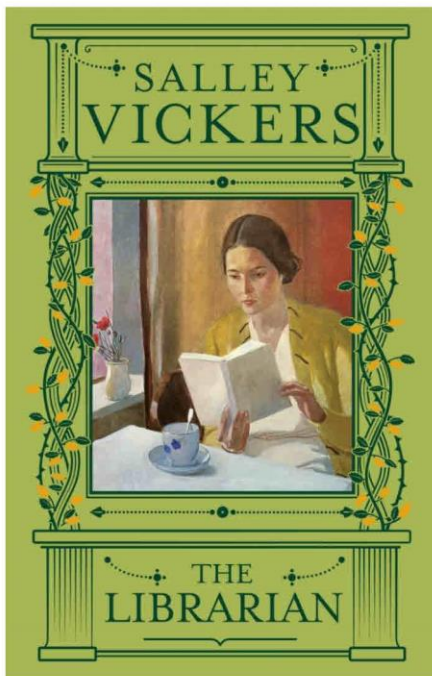
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*The Librarian*

Salley Vickers



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