



## The Friends of Highgate Library

# NEWSLETTER December 2015

### Highgate Library safe - for now

So now we know. Camden Council has decided how it is going to make the cuts to the Libraries' budget being forced on it by the Government's 'austerity' policy.

Highgate Library will remain open and maintain its current opening hours. This was the good news to members of the FoHL Committee when we were invited to a briefing on the future of Camden's libraries by Councillor Hai, Cabinet Member for Customers, Communities & Culture, and senior officers.

Following the Council's public consultation on the least damaging ways the Council should cut £800,000 from its current £4.5 million budget for the library Service, the officers' recommendation is that all 9 libraries should remain open though there will be a reduction in the opening hours at some of the other Camden libraries. This was the clearly preferred option that came out of the consultation.

Key amongst the changes proposed to achieve the necessary cut in spending are:

- A reduction in staffing in the Libraries and at management level made possible by the introduction of an automated library management system "Open Plus"
- A severe cut of one 1/3 in the budget for purchasing stock
- Income generation from out-of-hours use of the buildings
- Moving the Home Library Service to a volunteer led service

Given the sheer scale of the cuts made necessary by central government's grant reductions, the FoHL Officers consider that these proposals are extremely creative. This means that if the Councillors accept these proposals at the Council Cabinet Meeting on December 16, Camden will continue to provide a staffed library service across the borough.

The full details of the Consultation report are available on the Camden Council website at

[www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/cms-service/stream/asset/?asset\\_id=3390228&](http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/cms-service/stream/asset/?asset_id=3390228&)

**Sarah Harrison, Chair**

# Recent events

## **An Actor's Life - Corinna Marlowe**

On 10 September, actor Corinna Marlowe presented her five decades in acting. With enormous verve and wit, she recounted the ups and downs of her life as actor: as she put it with self-deprecating humour, 'now a west end lead and then a miserable understudy with some acting bits in between'. From understudy and maid in Sheridan's 'The Rivals' to being asked for 'a bite of her apple' by Placido Domingo and playing Margrethe Bohr in 'Copenhagen', her life belied that earlier statement. She interspersed her stories by acting snippets of a few of her roles to a spellbound audience. As she gracefully bowed to end the performance, the applause was very appreciative. A brilliant evening. (Michele Cohen)

## **Karl Marx at Home in Maitland Park**

On 8 October we had great fun enacting the life of the Marx family warts and all with the guidance of Beth Shaw and Martin Bould. The rhyming script was educational, witty and made us laugh a lot. We all sang the Internationale enthusiastically to round off a thoroughly enjoyable evening. We look forward to putting on another Domestic Theatre pop up play in the future. (Agnes Stewart)

## **Nursing in World War I**

On 12 November, an appreciative audience listened to readings from the diaries of Sister Edith Appleton, a nurse working near the front in the First World War. The readings were made by Lisa Robinson and Edith's wartime story, with illustrations from her diaries, was put together and presented by her great nephew, Dick Robinson. It was very moving to hear of the heartbreaking injuries she had to treat. On the other hand, it was delightful to hear how she managed to enjoy exploring the countryside and even made sketches of memorable views.

## **Roger's plaque**

Friends, relations and colleagues gathered outside Roger Lloyd Pack's home in Lady Somerset Road on 15 November. They were there to unveil a Heritage Trust plaque to commemorate our much missed past President, who did so much for our library as well as bringing joy to millions through his acting career.

## **Book review competition**

*We are having a book review competition for school pupils from Years 7 to 11, with a prize of £50. The book reviewed should be a novel borrowed from Highgate Library on the young person's own library card. For more details, please visit the Library. Last submission date Wednesday 20 January.*

**Keep in touch with developments**

**<http://www.dartmouthpark.org/FOHL>**

# Dates for your Diary

All on Thursdays at 7.15 for 7.30pm

## **10 December - Magic with Music, Mulled Wine and Mince Pies.**

Come and join us for an evening of celebration, with magician Christopher Howell with a warm-up of music hall numbers from our own Sarah and John Carrier.

## **14 January - Stan Newens - In Quest of a Fairer Society**

Well known former MP and MEP Stan Newens will join us to talk about his most recent book, *In Quest of a Fairer Society: My Life and Politics*, an autobiography that is a diary of practically every important political event between 1950 and 1999. Now in his eighties, Stan was a Labour MP from 1964 to 1970, and again from 1974 to 1983. Subsequently he was a Member of the European Parliament for fifteen years.

He was always seen as a left-winger and was a founder member of the Tribune Group of Labour MPs. In 1956 he was active in the campaign against the Suez expedition and, in the House of Commons, he opposed supporting US involvement in Vietnam and strongly opposed Soviet intervention in Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968.

## **11 February - David Drake - Paris at War 1939-1944**

David Drake will give an illustrated talk on everyday life in Paris from the declaration of war in September 1939 until the liberation of the city in August 1944, based on his just published book *Paris at War 1939-1944*.

Drawing on the diaries and reminiscences of people who were living in the city at the time, as well as on newspapers, police reports, radio broadcasts and newsreels his talk will cover the Phoney War, the Exodus (May-June 1940), the relations between Parisians and the occupying forces, the deprivations suffered by most Parisians, and collaboration. He will also discuss the growth of the Resistance from producing leaflets to gunning down German soldiers in the street, the persecution of Jews, the impact of the Allied bombing of the city, the Paris uprising, and will conclude with de Gaulle's triumphal march down the Champs-Élysées on 26 August 1944.

## **8 March - AGM plus Marc Haynes - Hidden Highgate**

Marc Haynes is a TV and radio writer and producer, who also works as a volunteer archivist at the Highgate Literary and Scientific Institution. His most recent BBC Radio 4 documentary was *Anne Frank's Trees*, presented by the poet Michael Rosen and broadcast on Holocaust Memorial Day 2015. He is currently writing with David Baddiel on the Radio 4 comedy series *Don't Make Me Laugh*, which returns for a second series in 2016. The author of popular London history blog *DarkestLondon.com*, he is currently finishing his book about the history of Highgate, to be published in 2016.

## **Civic and Cultural Centre**

The letting of the Centre is going well. Regular users of the hall include Woodcraft Folk, Bruno Groening Circle of Friends, art, karate, pilates and yoga classes. We also have the Dartmouth Park Film Club's monthly film night using our new film projector. There have been two very successful film showings so far and another, with a film made in 1959 in this area, is planned for January.

At weekends we have conferences, parties, drama and dance workshops and art exhibitions. The hall also serves as a polling station (for local and national elections). To check availability or to hire it, please go to the website [www.dartmouthpark.org/FOHL/HLCCC-childrens-corner](http://www.dartmouthpark.org/FOHL/HLCCC-childrens-corner) or email us. (Agnes Stewart)

### **Library News**

Kendra Bucknell writes: The partnership between Camden Library Service and the Friends of Highgate Library continues to be a success with library users and the local community. FOHL volunteers provide wonderful opportunities, adding value to new and existing community connections. One volunteer is working with Brookfield School and Camden library staff to encourage pupils to join the library and use its wealth of resources.

Autumn has been a period of adjustment for staff and volunteers at Highgate library with the introduction of a new computer management system. It brings many additional benefits, such as enabling volunteers to extend computer times and release printing for library users. Some volunteers have taken to this new resource confidently by helping library users and have even run a program of supportive IT sessions for other volunteers.

Volunteers had recent success with a Halloween craft session. Local children attended and made bats and other spooky crafts.

The library's Christmas Craft session is scheduled for Saturday 19th December. So don't forget to bring your children, grandchildren and friends along.

At Rhyme Time on Tuesday 15th December, Santa Claus will be visiting Highgate library. So if you want to join staff and volunteers for this festive event, then don't be late arriving because the session will be closed once it is full.

The learning centre now looks much smarter after being repainted and the broken trellis in the library garden has also been replaced. The plants on it are beginning to grow and the area is popular again with families and those wanting somewhere to relax.

#### **FRIENDS OF HIGHGATE LIBRARY**

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

Chair: Sarah Harrison, Vice Chair: Sarah Carrier

Hon. Secretary: Margot Kafno, Hon. Treasurer: Linda Lefevre

Committee: Michele Cohen, Andy Edwards, Alice Gutkind,

Agnes Stewart, Sally Thompson

Patrons: Julian Barnes, Tracy Chevalier, Hunter Davies, Andrew Motion, June Rose

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