



The Friends of Highgate Library

NEWSLETTER June 2014

FRIENDS NEWS

The Friends' Committee members are very grateful to Fabian Watkinson for chairing the Committee through a difficult period. He has decided to retire from the Friends Committee after thirteen years and write a symphony. He took over as acting Chair, but then agreed to become our permanent Chair. We shall miss him. I have agreed to be Acting Chair for the time being. We would like to have some new committee members, so please come and join us if you can! We are all happy to discuss what we do and how you could help.

At our AGM held on Thursday 27th March, Fabian spoke movingly about the sad loss of three important members of the Friends, Roger Lloyd Pack, Enid Evans and Richard Waddington, who each made a huge contribution to saving our library.

Linda Lefevre will describe elsewhere in this newsletter the use of the former 'Children's Corner' now called the 'Highgate Library Civic and Cultural Centre.' We are hoping that the funds raised from the letting of the hall will contribute to the upkeep of the Library. We also intend to recruit volunteers to work with library staff and organise activities in the Library from next April. We plan a community meeting on July 3 and a library festival on July 5 to describe plans and recruit volunteers.

We are grateful to the local Labour Party for organising a fund-raising Literary Quiz night in aid of the Cultural and Civic Centre which raised £750 and was great fun, and my husband John and I had an exciting time planning the questions! There were many which we didn't use and will be happy to supply to any other organisation which would like to run a similar event.

As usual, the Friends are contributing books as prizes for the children at Brookfield School who have made most progress in reading over the last year. I am looking forward to the prize-giving on 10 July.

Sarah Carrier, Acting Chair

Keep in touch with developments

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

Forthcoming talks and readings

All on Thursdays at 7.15 for 7.30pm

26 June: Gillian Tindall talks about her acclaimed book *Three Houses, Many Lives*

This book tells the stories of a Cotswold vicarage, a former girls' boarding school in Surrey and a Jacobean house now buried in inner London and the people who lived in them. (Please note that Gillian will be talking about this book at the Camden History Society AGM a week earlier, 19 June.)

17 July: Douglas Beattie - *Football Derbies*

Douglas is a freelance football writer and BBC news journalist, working in radio at New Broadcasting House in London. He has written two books on Glasgow Celtic and another on British football derbies, including the Tottenham / Arsenal rivalry. Doug - who is much more than just a football fan, explores the politics and sociology of football.

11 September: Dinah Livingstone reads from her new book of poems *The Vision Splendid*

The Future of Highgate Library – two important events

Since 2010 when Camden made serious cuts to its libraries we have been fighting to save Highgate. In recent months the Friends have worked with Camden officers to develop a plan to keep Highgate open with a much smaller council budget. This means Camden providing some staff time, a stock budget and overall management and support for the building, its staff and its equipment. Long ago a further **community meeting** was promised to report developments. This is planned for **Thursday 3rd July at 7.30pm**. Please come.

Following this on **Saturday 5th July** 12 to 4pm the Friends, jointly with Camden Library Service, are running a **Highgate Library mini-Festival** day with library staff, to encourage use of our library and recruit volunteers to be part of its future. Please put these dates in your diary and let us know if you can help – email FOHL@dartmouthpark.org or leave a note in the library.

Recent events

27 March Stephen Myers: *The Fleet – Highgate and Hampstead's Lost River*

This was a very well attended talk given after the AGM based on the book *Walking on Water: London's Hidden Rivers Revealed*. Stephen Myers has studied and worked on issues concerning water all over the world. Even as a child he was interested in the rivers flowing down to the Thames. The talk was

illustrated with maps and dealt with the history of rivers such as the Fleet, the Walbrook and the Tyburn, as well as creeks and ditches, focussing on rivers flowing from the north to the Thames. He speculated about how lovely it would be if parts of these rivers, covered up centuries ago, could be diverted into new water supply routes which could be left open in places to create walks beside them.

17 April: Roy Batt and colleagues: *My Constant Endeavour*

This was an interesting evening with former vet Roy and two fellow vets and a veterinary nurse giving brief readings from *My Constant Endeavour*, an anthology of poetry written by veterinary surgeons and nurses. The book was edited by Roy.

They also spoke in an interesting - and at times - amusing way about the day to day business of being a vet. If there was a common theme it was that dealing with the animals was nothing compared to what they had to cope with from their doting and eccentric owners.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL 2014

Thank you to all those members who have renewed their annual subscriptions. We are also grateful for the many generous donations. We are at a critical stage trying to develop the use of the Civic and Cultural Centre and work with volunteers to keep our library open. Keep up to date via our website www.dartmouthpark.org.uk/FOHL.

If you have a renewal slip with this newsletter it means we would like you to renew your membership for 2014! Subscriptions (£5, concessions £2) for this year can be sent to me, the Hon Treasurer at 35, Dartmouth Park Road NW5 1SU or left at the library in a sealed addressed envelope. Cheques payable to FOHL please. Please encourage your friends and neighbours to join us.

Now that our Newsletter is available on our website we think some members may prefer to read it there. If you no longer want a printed version, please email us to let us know. It will save paper and postage.

Linda Lefevre

Keeping in touch

Apart from our website at www.dartmouthpark.org.uk/FOHL we are on Twitter and Facebook – follow us and like us please!

READING GROUP

We meet every month on a Tuesday afternoon in the library reading and discussing a wide range of books.. The books we read are chosen

democratically and all suggestions are considered by the group. When our discussions are exhausted, we wind down with tea, biscuits and chat. If you 'd like to join us do get in touch and we will keep your name on a list. Margot Kafno: 020 7267 5565 & Ann Lewis: 020 7272 1722

Library News

Hello Friends of Highgate Library. I am Caroline Spencer and I am the new senior officer at Highgate library. I also manage Kentish Town library and I have worked in Camden libraries for over 20 years. I am very pleased to be working at Highgate library. Highgate was the very first library I joined. It felt magical when I was a child and I still remember the first books I borrowed - the small edition Beatrix Potter with colour illustrations. The library is a beautiful building with a vital role to play in the community, providing access to information, learning and leisure.

I will be working with Highgate staff to increase the activities and events we offer at the library and if anyone would be interested in running a regular activity do get in touch. This could be anything, from creative writing or knitting through to using the libraries ancestry.com subscription for researching family history. I look forward to meeting you over the coming months and working together to ensure a vibrant future for Highgate library.

Highgate Library Civic and Cultural Centre

Use of the Centre continues to grow as well as the range of activities. It is in regular use for local community meetings, the Neighbourhood Forum, Area Action Group, Transition Dartmouth Park and political parties as well as our own events. It has been a Polling Station and has been used by Camden for health promotion sessions. It hosts a range of exercise and dance classes and is becoming a popular party venue. Sadly the hire fees still do not match the licence fee but Camden Library officers are meeting the shortfall while the use of the Centre develops.

FRIENDS OF HIGHGATE LIBRARY

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

Acting Chair:	Sarah Carrier
Hon. Secretary:	Margot Kafno
Hon. Treasurer:	Linda Lefevre
Committee:	Michele Cohen, Andy Edwards, Alice Gutkind, Sarah Harrison, Agnes Stewart and Sally Thompson
Patrons:	Julian Barnes, Tracy Chevalier, Hunter Davies, Andrew Motion and June Rose