



The Friends of Highgate Library

NEWSLETTER March 2016

Chair's Report

FoHL is just completing its first year of jointly managing Highgate Library with Camden Library Services. It has been a steep learning curve for all involved: the Volunteers have had to acquire an unexpected amount of knowledge about the IT systems that are an integral part of library management while the Council has had to acquire new skills for working and decision making with a non-Local Authority partner. However, the new skills and energy that the Volunteers are bringing have strengthened existing relations such as those with Brookfield School, as well as maintained traditions like Craft Workshops and the ever popular visit by Father Christmas.

October 2016 sees the 110th anniversary of the opening of Highgate Library. We are planning to mark this and are particularly keen that the memories of those of all ages who have used the Library down the years should be included. So please get in touch with us: share your stories and photographs if you have them.

As its role has expanded in response to the growing challenges public services are facing, FoHL is now re-thinking the way it works. It is creating more, and more varied, opportunities for local people to become involved. Whether you fancy becoming a Library Volunteer, helping to run the Civic and Cultural Centre or taking on a role in design, IT or publicity there is a place for you within the expanding FoHL. Being involved is an enjoyable and productive way to learn new skills, improve your CV and meet new people as well as helping an important local resource to survive. We will shortly circulate details of some key skills that we are seeking, but in the meantime if you would like to get involved, do contact us.

We are pleased to announce that Ellie Lewy-Sharp is the winner of the Book Review Competition organised by FoHL for school students in Years 8 to 11. The judges unanimously selected her review of "The Book Thief" by Marcus Zusak for the £50.00 prize, kindly donated by Catharine Wells in memory of Enid Evans. Ellie has been invited to receive her prize at the FoHL AGM on March 10th.

As we were preparing this issue of the Newsletter we were saddened to learn of the death of local author Margaret Forster, widely recognised as one of the finest writers of her generation and long-time friend of Highgate Library. We have sent our condolences to her husband, Hunter Davies, one of our founding patrons, and to her family

Sarah Harrison, Chair

Recent events

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

A very enjoyable evening was had by all. Firstly our own Sarah and John Carrier entertained us with some old-time songs accompanied by Fabian Watkinson on the piano, with John proving a very entertaining raconteur. Then we were enthralled by Christopher Howell, who performed the most amazing conjuring tricks, culminating in a £20 note appearing complete - having been cut up earlier - in the middle of a lemon! Quite fantastic.

14 January - Stan Newens - In Quest of a Fairer Society.

Despite horrible weather and a nasty cold, veteran socialist Stan Newens drove down from Harlow to give us a lively account of his life and career. As a young man he became a miner rather than join the army and fight in Korea and he gave an entertaining description of his experiences as an NUM shop steward. As a Labour MP and then MEP, specialising in foreign policy, he met with just about every radical leader of the late 20th century, from Fidel Castro to Nelson Mandela - and seemed to have an intriguing anecdote about each of them.

David Drake's Paris at War, 1939-1944.

On Thursday, 11 February, 2016 the Highgate Library Civic and Cultural Centre was filled to almost overflowing with a very good talk by David Drake on his newly published book. He also showed some slides taken at the time of the Nazi occupation. It was a terrifying confusing time for most Parisians, particularly for the Jews and the partisans. 1944 was the year when Paris was liberated, and he spoke briefly about the aftermath of it.

AGM Thursday 10th March 7.30pm

Before a talk by Marc Haynes on "Hidden Highgate", there will be a short business meeting with brief reports on the year's work and Committee elections. Nominations to the Committee are welcome and can be made beforehand by sending a nomination to the secretary of FOHL c/o Highgate Library, emailing us at FOHL@dartmouthpark.org or in person at the AGM. Existing Officers and Committee Members are listed at the end of this Newsletter

Keep in touch with developments

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

Dates for your Diary

All on Thursdays at 7.15 for 7.30pm

10th 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.

14th April - Andrew Whitehead and Martin Plaut - Curious Camden Town

In the follow-up to their successful '*Curious Kentish Town*', local authors Martin Plaut and Andrew Whitehead will be looking at thirty or so locations around Camden Town - from the Roundhouse to the Regent's Park barracks, from the Cobden statue to the spiritualist temple - and tell the remarkable tales attached to them. The subjects range from Amy Winehouse to the moment in the Sixties when Camden became 'cool' and you will hear about a prize-winning bare-fist pugilist, the suffragette behind the folk dance revival, a renowned black revolutionary and the biggest allotment in central London. In the words of the Ham & High 'the rich tapestry of Camden's history revealed'.

12th May- Danny Scheinmann - The Half Life of Joshua Jones

Danny, local author of the bestselling "Random Acts of Heroic Love", will talk about his long awaited second novel "The Half Life of Joshua Jones", a psychological thriller set in and around Highgate. Danny, a professional storyteller, will entertain you with stories and tales both from the book and about some of his extraordinary experiences in life and publishing.

9th June Sixteen Sunsets - Poetry meets the Blues - Jehane Markham, Hartley Lloyd Pack and friends

This will be a charity event and any donations will go to Pancreatic Cancer Uk. Two years after the death of actor **Roger Lloyd Pack**, the much loved president of Highgate Library for many years, his widow, Jehane, and his son Hartley, have joined forces to create an album in his memory. Collaborating with musicians and singers they have created a stunning and original piece of work that was launched to a packed audience at Map Cafe in February. Sad but not sentimental, *Sixteen Sunsets* proves that the energy of grief can be transformed into enduring works that reflect and challenge all that life can offer. To download or buy a copy go to: sixteensunsets.bandcamp.com/releases.

Wednesday June 29th The Tempest in one hour

Following last year's brilliant *Twelfth Night* Valerie Doulton is bringing her US students to entertain us with a short version of one of Shakespeare's last plays.

Membership renewal 2016

If you find a membership renewal form in this Newsletter, then your membership fee is due. Current subscription is £6 (concessions are £3). You can pay by cash or cheque, cheques made payable to **Friends of Highgate Library**. **You can also pay by bank transfer** to Friends of Highgate Library at RBS 189-191 Camden High Street NW1 7BP Sort Code: 16 00 23 Account number: 10008322. Donations are always welcome.

You can bring your subscription to the AGM on March 10th, OR follow the instructions on the form. 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 and you can email us with comments too.

Our main expenditure is on our activities: the newsletters and events and giving annual prizes at Brookfield school for the children who have made most progress in reading. Please tell your friends and neighbours about FOHL and encourage them to join. Our library is a unique public space with a proud history of providing a local public service for the whole community. FOHL members receive a quarterly newsletter with news about the library and our events.

Membership forms are also in the library entrance area, or to download from our website.

Highgate Library Civic and Cultural Centre

The Centre goes from strength to strength with our Film Club, an art exhibition regular dance and drama rehearsals and many community meetings. Local sports clubs and allotment groups are added to our returning family party users. If you want to hire it please go to our website or email us to enquire.

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, Alice Gutkind, Natalie Doyle

Agnes Stewart, Sally Thompson

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