



The Friends  
of Highgate Library

# NEWSLETTER

## September 2015

### Progress and challenges at Highgate Library

Highgate Library has now been jointly managed and staffed by FoHL for 5 months.

This new arrangement is bedding in well and new ideas are beginning to bubble up. The expanding number of library volunteers, as well as keeping the library open are, with the librarians, beginning to look for new ways of improving the Library Service while FoHL is working with Camden library staff to expand the role of the volunteers and make it a more useful and fulfilling role.

The HL Civic & Cultural Centre is thriving and used by increasing numbers of groups and individuals. We are especially pleased at its use as Cultural Centre: next month, for example, sees the launch of the Dartmouth Park Film Club. It's taken 2 years and a lot of hard work to get to this point, but it is a great pleasure to see the Centre taking its place as a valuable and valued community resource.

FoHL gained charitable status in May. All its Trustees are members of the FoHL committee. FoHL Charitable Foundation has now taken on responsibility for those elements of the work with charitable objectives - managing the library and running the Civic & Cultural Centre – while the others, organising our public meetings, producing the newsletters and importantly championing the cause of public libraries, remain the responsibility of the association FoHL.

FoHL is now tackling the latest challenge to face our library. The continuing Central Government attack on public services means that the Camden Library Service has to cut a further £800,000 or about 25% from its budget next year. The Council has launched a major consultation exercise asking local residents for their views on the options for achieving this. FoHL is organising a public meeting to discuss these cuts and the options proposed by the Council. FoHL would urge all residents to take the time to fill in the questionnaire, which is available in the Library and to come to the meeting. **The meeting will be in the library on September 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7.30.**

All this activity means that the workload of FOHL has increased very considerably over the past 2 years. While increasing numbers of FOHL volunteers are taking on significant roles, the size of the committee itself has not grown. We would welcome new members who have some time and lots of energy to contribute. If you are interested in joining the committee, please do contact us to discuss what's involved.

Sarah Harrison, Chair

## Recent events

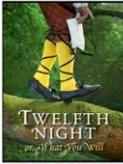
**Thursday 11 June Professor John Styles on ‘Threads of Feeling’.** Distinguished historian John Styles gave a presentation on the early history of the Foundlings Hospital, now the Foundlings Museum in Brunswick Square. The hospital was founded by Captain Thomas Coram in 1739, having petitioned King George II for 17 years for the Royal Charter permitting him to create it. Professor Styles first situated the building in its 18<sup>th</sup> century architectural and cultural context, and then talked about the ‘Threads of Feeling’ exhibition he curated there. He told us how destitute mothers queued in hundreds to leave their infants in a safe place when their economic and social situation prevented them from looking after their child. The ‘threads’ refer to the scrap of cloth the mothers left with their child as a way of identifying them when they would take them back, a hope forlorn for most. I think there were few dry eyes at the end of Dr Styles’s talk. Despite the emotion, many interesting questions were asked which Dr Styles answered to everyone’s satisfaction.

*Michèle Cohen*

The Friends of Highgate Library present

Thursday 25th June 2015  
7.15 for 7.30pm

Shakespeare’s Twelfth Night in One Hour



Valerie Doulton's Live Literature Company will present an open dress rehearsal of the production "Twelfth Night in One Hour" before the production moves on to Stratford upon Avon. It is performed by drama students from Niagara University USA. All welcome including children with a family member.

Highgate Library Civic and Cultural Centre  
in The Children's Corner, Croftdown Road, NWS 1HB  
[www.dartmouthpark.org/FOHL/events](http://www.dartmouthpark.org/FOHL/events)

Admission Free

### Thursday 25 June - Twelfth Night in One Hour

Young faces were rapt as they watched the performance of Twelfth Night by drama students from Niagara University USA. Valerie Doulton of the Live Literature Company was delighted to find the many younger members of the audience had studied the play and the audience were very impressed with the quality of acting of the American visitors.

## Reaching Out

This summer Friends have been at the Highgate Fair in the Square, the Brookfield School Festival and at the Highgate Newtown Community Centre Fun Day. We donated and presented books to children from Brookfield School as prizes for the most improvement in reading in each class. We are keen to recruit new members, find volunteers and let everyone know we are here working hard to support our library.

**We'll be at the York Rise Street Party on Sunday September 13<sup>th</sup> from 12 till 5pm so come and say hello!**

**Keep in touch with developments**

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

# Dates for your Diary

## **Thursday 10 September - An Actor's Life - Corinna Marlowe**

Pantomime principal boy to Greek tragic queen, understudy to lead - prison to village hall to National Theatre. Local actor Corinna Marlowe will tell us about the ups and downs of 5 decades in acting, and will illustrate her talk with dramatized excerpts.

## **Thursday 8 October - Karl Marx at Home in Maitland Park**

A pop-up play about the home life of the great man, who lived his last decades in Maitland Park, Kentish Town, and is buried in Highgate Cemetery. Come and take a part if you wish, or watch and be enthralled by the family dramas. From writing *Das Kapital* to dealing with debt, friends, family and illness - see Marx as you have never seen him! The event will be led by local founders of 'domestic theatre', Beth Shaw and Martin Bould

**Thursday 12 November - Nurses' Diaries from the First World War** This illustrated presentation by Dick Robinson with readings by his wife Lisa will give us an insight into the lives of nurses during the First World War. It is based on the amazing diaries of his great aunt, Sister Edith Appleton, who served in France throughout that terrible war, often close to the front line. Books of the diaries will be on sale.

## **Thursday 10 December - Our Winter Celebration**

Sketches, singing, poetry, mulled wine and festive food.

## **Other events**

### **Launch of Dartmouth Park Film Club.**

Change of date. Dartmouth Park Film Club. Due to the clash with the Dartmouth Park Talks meeting on September 17th with film director Sarah Gavron talking about her new film "Suffragette" at The Star, the Dartmouth Park Film club will start in October. Watch out for details on our website, by emails, and on our Facebook and Twitter pages.

**Wednesday 23 September - consultation on the future of Camden's libraries** Councillor Abdul Hai, cabinet member for Libraries, and our Highgate Councillors, plus senior officers, are coming to meet us and present the ongoing consultation on cuts to the Libraries Budget. You can respond through the Camden website at [www.camden.gov.uk/futurelibraries](http://www.camden.gov.uk/futurelibraries) or fill in a form in the Library. We decided a public meeting would give us all the chance to find out more and discuss the options. Please come!

**Keep in touch with events**

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

## **Civic and Cultural Centre**

Over the summer the Centre was used by Challenge, part of the National Citizens Service, providing a five week programme to bring 15 to 17 year olds from a variety of backgrounds together to develop their own skills and to work in teams to plan projects with local organisations. They took up issues such as mental health, youth unemployment, street art and encouraging young people into activities at centres in Camden. This booking uses the centre at a time when regular classes and clubs are having a break so gives a useful income. In July we had a full week of Aikido, a martial art concerned with self-defence while protecting the attacker, led by an international expert.

People who have used the hall are returning for more family events and we are pleased to host an art class from Lauderdale House while it is refurbished. Please continue to recommend our centre to your friends and neighbours. The Centre calendar, photos and booking form are on the HLCCC website.

*Linda Lefevre*

## **Library News**

*Kendra Bucknell writes:*

This summer has been a busy time for Highgate Library as several new volunteers have been trained, the Summer Reading Challenge and craft activities have been taking place, the office has been cleared and there have been some staff changes.

The volunteers have settled into the library and have created some lovely displays which are encouraging readers young and old to borrow books. The volunteers have also got involved in the Summer Reading Challenge and there are lots of happy children around who are reading more books and handing in their reviews to gain their prizes and volunteer encouragement.

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### **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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