



The Friends of Highgate Library

NEWSLETTER MARCH 2012

FRIENDS NEWS

Consultation on Camden's 'Community Investment Programme' for Highgate New Town (including our library) will now begin this month and the council are keen to involve all 'key stakeholders'. The Mobile Library Service has already ended and the Home Library Service will be moving to Swiss Cottage shortly. This will free the space occupied by the old children's library for new uses. We are still waiting for the Council's response to the Friends' proposal for a governing body for our library. Understandably their main focus at present is on the three libraries which will lose their council funding next year: Belsize, Chalk Farm and Heath.

There will be new staff at our library from this April when Camden will be announcing its new opening hours, though we are not expecting much change at Highgate.

With the AGM this month comes the opportunity to join the Friends' committee. Please give this serious thought because now, more than ever, we need new blood to help fight any threat of closure. Sadly, Enid Evans, who is unwell, will be leaving the committee. She was a founding member of the Friends and worked enormously hard over the years as our treasurer. But Enid was always much, much more and helped us all behind the scenes in so many ways. We will miss her help and support tremendously and offer her our gratitude and very best wishes.

Fabian Watkinson, Chairman

RECENT EVENTS

Review of Gillian Tindall's talk

An overflow audience came to hear Gillian Tindall who spoke about her book "The Fields Beneath". Though her book was published a few years ago a new edition has been published with new material. The book is very much a paean to Kentish Town which Gillian Tindall prefers to Camden Town. A long and interesting question and answer session followed the much appreciated talk.

READING GROUP

There are ten of us who meet every month in the library and we read a wide range of fiction and non-fiction. Our discussions tend to be lively and interesting.

"The Darling" by Russell Banks was our January book, a harrowing tale of an American woman Hannah Musgrave who lives a privileged life as the wife of a government official in Monrovia, Liberia, with her husband and three sons until violent events make her flee Africa alone. Although the description of the political turmoil with Charles Taylor taking over the government was gripping, we all agreed that Hannah's character wasn't engaging enough and she didn't seem to relate to anybody in her life apart from the chimpanzees in the sanctuary where she worked. For that reason it was difficult to identify with her and feel the pain of the tragedy she had to face.

Our next book is going to be Emily Bronte's baffling and strange "Wuthering Heights." We all felt we wanted to re-read and re-evaluate this classic novel. Is it overrated, or is there more to it than we think?

Emily Bronte will be followed by Beryl Bainbridge. Look forward to it! We keep a waiting list so if you think you might be interested in joining us please get in touch.

Agnes Stewart (07811934095)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Annual General Meeting Thursday 29th March. 7.15 for 7.30.

Martin Wilkinson will lead a discussion on the book,

“The Spirit Level: Why More Equality is better for everyone”

Bankers’ bonuses, the “squeezed middle” and benefit cuts raise our concern about unfairness. The Spirit Level research provides evidence that greater economic inequality causes social damage and that levels of violent crime, mental illness, and illiteracy are higher in more unequal societies.

Before this talk 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 overleaf. Nominations to the Committee are welcome. You can send a nomination to the secretary of FOHL c/o Highgate Library, by emailing us at FOHL@dartmouthpark.org or in person at the AGM.

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 notice of our events. **Membership forms are in the library entrance on the FOHL notice board, or can be downloaded from our website.**

Anne Wroe, Thursday 10 May, 7.15 for 7.30

Anne is returning to Highgate Library to discuss her latest book: 'Orpheus, **The Song of Life**'. She will tell us how she had the idea for the book and about her interest in this mythical figure, half-man, half-god, musician, magician, theologian, poet and lover. In this unusual and fascinating book, she traces the man and the power he represents through the many aspects of his life such as his well-known voyage with the Argonauts to fetch the Golden Fleece his love for Eurydice and the journey to Hades and, finally, his terrible death. This is surely an event not to be missed.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR 2012

Membership renewals are due in March. Current subscription is £5 (concessions are £2). A renewal form is enclosed. You can pay by cash or cheque, cheques made payable to **Friends of Highgate Library**. Donations are always welcome and help us to campaign to keep library services. Thank you for your continuing support. You can bring your subscription to the AGM on March 29th, OR you can leave it at the library in a sealed envelope for Linda Lefevre, Hon. Treasurer FOHL, OR you can deliver it to her at 35 Dartmouth Park Road NW5 1SU.

We use email to send urgent messages and reminders of events. If you wish to keep up with last minute changes and campaigning activities please ensure that we have your up to date email address. Ours is FOHL@dartmouthpark.org so you can email us with comments too.

THE FRIENDS HAVE A WEBSITE!

Find us at www.dartmouthpark.org/FOHL. We keep our current newsletter and poster for our next event on our new website. You can see photos of our great evening with Gillian Tindall. You can also download a membership application form.

FRIENDS OF HIGHGATE LIBRARY

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

President: Roger Lloyd Pack

Chairman: Fabian Watkinson

Hon. Secretary: Margot Kafno

Hon. Treasurer: Linda Lefevre

Committee: Sarah Carrier, Andy Edwards, Alice Gutkind,
Sally Thompson, Agnes Stewart

Patrons: Hunter Davies and June Rose