



## The Friends of Highgate Library

# NEWSLETTER Winter 2018

### Highgate Library News

We plan an exciting programme of monthly events but life can get in the way. We are immensely grateful to Andrew Whitehead for stepping in at the last minute when Salley Vickers had to cancel due to a bereavement. The November evening was well attended and much enjoyed, with copies of *Curious Kings Cross* arriving only that morning for sale on the evening. Andrew is now offering occasional guided walks to see the places he has written about. Watch out for news of these on his Facebook Page or ours. We are pleased that Salley plans to be our guest in May.

Our March event has changed too, Hunter Davies is unable to be our guest as he will be on holiday following some serious surgery. We are delighted to have Jessica Hepburn tell us about her life and experience interviewing inspiring women about motherhood and then swimming the Channel! Details of all our events inside. You can also keep in touch via Facebook and Twitter or via our Website events page <http://www.dartmouthpark.org/FOHL/events>

As Sarah Harrison reports there are welcome improvements planned for our library both in the building and in stock of books and toys. Our partnership with Camden Council allows us to support and extend what Camden can provide. However, the Council is making more cuts to services as its income from the Government is reduced yet again. There is not much left in “backroom” services to cut and the provision of new stock items has already been reduced. We will keep you informed as to whether next year’s budget is proposed to affect Highgate Library.

If you have not renewed your membership - this is the last chance before we get into the 2019-2020 year. You can renew online by bank transfer. We also have an online form. Go to <http://www.FOHL.org.uk> for details. If not, there are forms in the library and at our events - fill one in, add a cheque and post it to Sarah Carrier at 37 Dartmouth Park Road NW5 1SU.

As always, we welcome you to join us as volunteers to work in the library, to manage the hall or to join our committee to plan and run events. Just come and talk to any committee member at an event or contact us by email or through our website. We also welcome your suggestions for events.

*Linda Lefevre, Chair*

## Things to Come

**Thursday December 13th 7.30pm** An evening of music and drama to celebrate the season. See flyer opposite for details.

**Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2019 7.30pm** Grace Livingstone

**Britain and the Dictatorships of Argentina and Chile, 1973-82** Local activist Grace is a Visiting Research Fellow at the Institute of Latin American Studies, University of London. She will talk about her new book which traces the social networks of Foreign Office officials and business leaders to show how policies that benefitted the interests of British companies and banks were prioritized and it discusses the evolution of British 'ethical' foreign policy.

**Thursday February 14th 7.30pm** Rachel Malik **Miss Boston and Miss Hargreaves**

Rachel will present her highly acclaimed first novel, based on the life of her grandmother. Rene Hargreaves walks out on her family to take a position as a Land Girl at the remote Starlight farm. There she will live with and help Elsie Boston. At first Elsie and Rene are unsure of one another - but over time they each come to depend on the other. They become inseparable. Until the day a visitor from Rene's past arrives and their careful, secluded life is thrown into confusion. **Shortlisted for the 2018 Walter Scott Prize for historical fiction** The Judges said: *"Miss Boston and Miss Hargreaves is a quietly beautiful and brilliant novel that captures the heart and essence of a love story in the years during and after the Second World War A truly wonderful, memorable novel."*

**Thursday March 14<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm** Jessica Hepburn **21 Miles** *"When my life didn't go to plan, I ate and I swam. This is the story of how I met and ate with 21 inspirational women and then swam 21 miles in search of the answer to the question: 'Does motherhood make you happy?'"*

After a decade of trying to become a mother **Jessica** knew it was time to do something different. So, she decided to swim the English Channel – no easy feat, especially for someone who couldn't swim very well. This then led to another idea: what if she wrote to a collection of inspiring women, asking if they would meet her to answer the question: does motherhood make you happy? The response was overwhelming. In 2015, Jessica set out in the dark, taking the words that each of the women had given to sea in her bid to answer the question.

**Thursday April 11th 7.30pm** **AGM and Martin Wilkinson** **The Inner Level** In The Spirit Level Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett put inequality at the centre of public debate by showing conclusively that less equal societies fare worse than more equal ones across everything from education to life expectancy. Martin will update us and look at the latest research in **The Inner Level**

The Friends of Highgate Library present  
Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2018  
7.15 for 7.30pm

## Seasonal Words and Music



The Moving Chamber Choir will entertain us with seasonal music,  
Corinna Marlowe offers a seasonal pot-pourri of poetry and prose with  
local connections and Oliver Lewis and Robert West sing the blues.

**Come and have fun!**

Highgate Library Civic and Cultural Centre  
in The Children's Corner, Croftdown Road, NW5 1HB

[www.dartmouthpark.org/FOHL/events](http://www.dartmouthpark.org/FOHL/events)

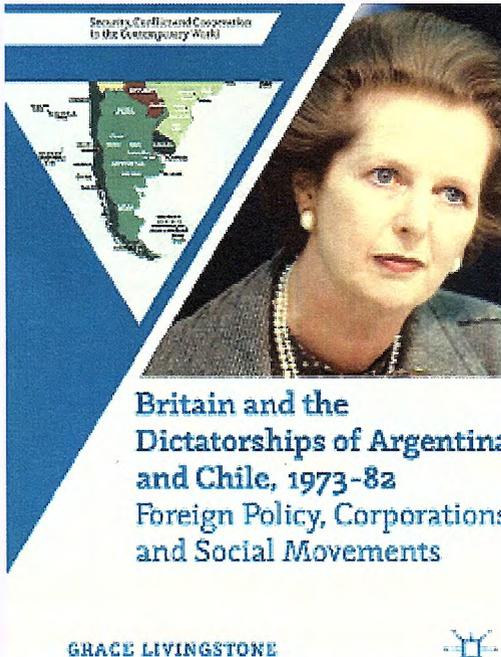
Admission Free

The Friends of Highgate Library present  
**Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2019**

7.15 for 7.30pm

**Grace Livingstone**

**Britain and the Dictatorships of Argentina and  
Chile, 1973-82**



**Grace** is a Visiting Research Fellow at the Institute of Latin American Studies, University of London. She is also a journalist and has written widely about Latin America. She will talk about her new book which examines newly-released British government documents to explore the shaping of British policy towards the dictatorships of Chile and Argentina. It discusses the evolution of 'ethical' foreign policy and its continuing influence on British policy today.

**Highgate Library Civic and Cultural Centre  
in The Children's Corner, Croftdown Road, NW5 1HB**

**[www.dartmouthpark.org/FOHL/events](http://www.dartmouthpark.org/FOHL/events)**

**Admission Free**

**Thursday May 9<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm    Salley Vickers    The Librarian**

A charmingly subversive novel about a library in 1950s England, by the acclaimed author of *The Cleaner of Chartres* and *Cousins*. Come and meet Salley as she talks about this book and her passion for libraries with David Drake.

## **Recent Events**

**Sunday September 9th York Rise Street Party** The Friends ran a stall to promote the Library, encourage membership and recruit volunteers. Authors Caitlin Davies and Jessica Hepburn joined us to sign their latest books and meet local book lovers.

**Thursday September 13th Caitlin Davies Remarkable Women** Caitlin Davies talked about her two books that were published recently. *Bad Girls: A History of Rebels and Renegades*, about women detained at HM Prison Holloway, among whom were many suffragettes. The personal stories Davies discovered were riveting, if often harrowing. The mood was uplifted when she introduced her novel *Daisy Belle, Swimming Champion of the World*. The main character is based partly on Victorian, Agnes Beckwith who swam the River Thames from London Bridge to Greenwich aged 14. Who knew? Caitlin closed with some fascinating reflections on how different it is to write a novel and a factual social history.

**Thursday October 4th was National Poetry Day**, to mark it Highgate Library held a small poetry-reading event to celebrate the work of John Horder. Nick Durant, a team leader in Camden's Library service, read some of John's poems and a selection of others, including his own, to an appreciative audience.

**Thursday October 11th Mike Newell in conversation with Dan Carrier**

On October 11, Mike Newell discussed his work with Dan Carrier, a format which allowed Newell to display his wonderful skills as a raconteur. Aside from stories about *Donnie Brasco* and *4 Weddings*, what was fascinating is that he took us 'behind the scenes', revealing what creating a film like *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society* involved: reading several scripts, finding the right setting – in this case, not modern Guernsey but more rural Devon and Cornwall; casting the female lead, key because it opens the door to the financing; most difficult is knowing how to deal with actors. The audience was spellbound, a marvellous evening.

**8 November 2018 Andrew Whitehead 'Curious King's Cross'** Andrew gave us an excellent presentation at short notice about his new book, *'Curious King's Cross'*. The secrets of St Pancras Old Church were particularly interesting. It was this church where Mary Wollstonecraft married William Godwin, and it was in the churchyard where she was buried. But where is her body now? What is the connection between the iconic phone box and Sir John Soane's memorial in the churchyard? These are just two examples you can find the answers to in the book which is greatly enhanced by Brian Kelly's photographs and a map. An excellent aid for future curiosity seekers.

## News from the Library

It is always a pleasure to announce positive developments in the Library.

On December 1st the lighting in the adult learning centre is being renewed. This will be such an improvement for all those who use the library - the public, staff and volunteers - as well as making the library a more attractive space. It's great that Camden have been able to fund this work.

We have been told that the printer which is linked to the public computers, will be replaced by an improved model. This will incorporate a wireless facility that will enable those who use their own computers to access the printer.

The library offer for children is being extended by the re-launch of the toy library. This provides toys for younger children to borrow on the same basis as other library stock, enabling children to have a wider variety of toys to enjoy. The toy library was withdrawn last year while it was sorted, re-catalogued and improved by the addition of new toys. In the New Year children visiting the library on Tuesday and Thursday mornings for the Baby Bounce and Rhyme Time session will be able to borrow toys and books to take home.

For adults the stock of books has been considerably enlarged by the addition of over six hundred books. The majority are fiction, the rest biography and poetry, and nearly all published within the last few years. This significantly extends the books available in these subjects. We are very grateful for these books, in the main donated to the Library by the late John Horder, as their perfect condition and subject matter means that they were suitable to be incorporated into the Camden library stock.

Staff and Volunteers have worked very hard to bring about these positive developments in the library. But in these gloomy days when the library service is facing yet more cuts, your Library needs your active support more than ever. "Issues" – that is the number of items taken out by library users - are one of the key indicators looked at by the Council when it assesses the usefulness of a library. So please make it one of your New Year's resolutions to come into the Library at least once a fortnight, explore the new books, the CDs and DVDs, and the talking books (new stock here too) and borrow them to take home. If all FoHL members did that, Highgate Library's future would be more secure.

Our Prime Minister may say that austerity is over but sadly it's not for library services!

**Sarah Harrison, Chair of the Highgate Library Management Group**

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### FRIENDS OF HIGHGATE LIBRARY

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

Chair: Linda Lefevre

Vice Chair & Membership: Sarah Carrier

Hon. Secretary: Margot Kafno

Hon. Treasurer: Patrick Lefevre

Committee: Michele Cohen, Agnes Stewart, Paul Harris

Sarah Harrison, Ann Cheyne & Virginia Kerridge

President: Sue Perkins

Patrons: Julian Barnes, Joanna Briscoe, Tracy Chevalier, Hunter Davies, Caitlin Davies, John Harvey, & Charlotte Mendelson

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