

BOOK CLUB 2012 - 2013

SEPTEMBER 2012

We had a lively first meeting where we realised that most of us had not been in a reading group before and were a bit uncertain what would happen. In the event, we had a really interesting discussion of *Best Exotic Marigold Hotel* and also voted on our reading for the next few months. The October book is *The Seven Sisters* by Margaret Drabble.

DECEMBER 2012

We had a very enjoyable meeting in November sharing a couple of our favourite poems with each other. Even the most sceptical agreed that it added a lot to poetry to be able to hear it and to read it out loud. January meeting is in Carlton Library on 8th and our chosen book is the autobiography of the Countess of Devonshire: *Wait for Me!* The February book is Carol Shield's *The Stone Diaries*.

APRIL 2013

We had our readers' choice in March. We have one of these every three months. A couple of the group agree to present a book they like to other members of the group. Everyone is free to read either, both or neither of the books. The idea is that you can have a rest if you want to, step off the treadmill of the monthly read, and enjoy someone else talking about their book experience.

In the event almost everyone had read one of the books, and some had read both. Many thanks to David and Maggie for their different but excellent presentations which stimulated a lot of discussion. We've prepared a list of around 24 books that we've long listed for next year's reading. We'll be voting on our choices at our June Meeting. It promises to be a nail biting and exciting event. Reading for April is *Frankie and Stankie* by Barbara Trapido.

JULY 2013

The next meeting of the reading group will be at Carlton Library on Tuesday 6th August. We will be discussing Ishiguro's book: *An Artist of the Floating World*. We have recently voted on our reading choices for the next year and the programme is available if you are interested in joining the group. Many thanks to Keith and Maggie who chaired the discussion in June.

AUGUST 2013

The reading group continues to thrive at the monthly meetings in Carlton Library. Recent books we have read include Andrew Davidson's *The Gargoyle*, Margaret Atwood's *Wilderness Tips* and Kazuo Ishiguro's *An Artist of the Floating World*.

SEPTEMBER 2013

Ten of us attended our annual poetry reading session. Poems about journeys took up over an hour and a half! Keith started off with two touching and sad war poems, *A Working Party*, and *The General*, both by S. Sassoon.

Trish chose *The Rolling English Road* by G. K. Chesterton.

Ian read *The Owl and The Pussy Cat* - always amusing.

Gwyneth read a favourite of hers about the *Railway Cat* by T S Eliot.

Jean found a booklet of local children's poems and read an 11year old's poem called *Walking To School*, which was charming.

Joyce's poem evoked early 20th century bed-sit land and up and coming young women getting ready for the journey to work. (Not very glamorous, more plucky determination.)

Joyce enjoys walking and often ponders the choices of route taken and what the other road might have entailed. Her poems were *Business Girls* by John Betjeman and *The Road Not Taken* by R. Frost.

Mary's poem was *Homecoming* by Desmond O'Grady, a descriptive sad poem about returning to visit the parental home. Then a Welsh poem about a proud farmer driving his newly acquired 'modern' tractor, written by R.S. Thomas.

Jean's poem *Journey Of The Magi* by T. S. Elliot gave a sometimes grim view of the arduous biblical undertaking.

Carolyn was inspired by members of the Walking Group who suggested "the poet from oop North". So she chose *Torch Passes By* written by I. McMillan, which is about the Olympic torch passing through Yorkshire. Then Carolyn recited a poem she had learnt years ago to get a flavour of the language of the country she was visiting. She had to say it many times whilst there much to the amusement of her foreign hosts. We were much more solemnly impressed!

Rofie read *Night Mail*, by W.H. Auden with the rhythm of the poem mimicking the train movement.

I concluded the afternoon with *Digging* by S. Heaney to acknowledge his death.

Report by Lyn Jenkins.

NOVEMBER 2013

At our November meeting, we agreed that we didn't really like Alison Weir's *Eleanor of Aquitaine*. We found it too detailed and yet not informative enough. Although we did, however, have an interesting discussion about why we didn't like it and about biography and historical fiction in general.

We also had a brief look at *The Captive Queen*, which is Alison Weir's historical novel based on Eleanor. There was quite a lot of 'racy writing' and some rather bad sex scenes - the excerpts had to be carefully edited to avoid offence!

To this reviewer, it read a bit like *Hello Magazine*. The characters seemed to be both breathless and thoroughly contemporary to our age, even if they were dressed up in cod pieces and wimples. The general consensus seemed to be that Weir should stick to biography and try to widen her range of sources.

DECEMBER 2013

We had two great introductions from Trish and Lyn about *David Copperfield* and *The Screwtape Letters*.