

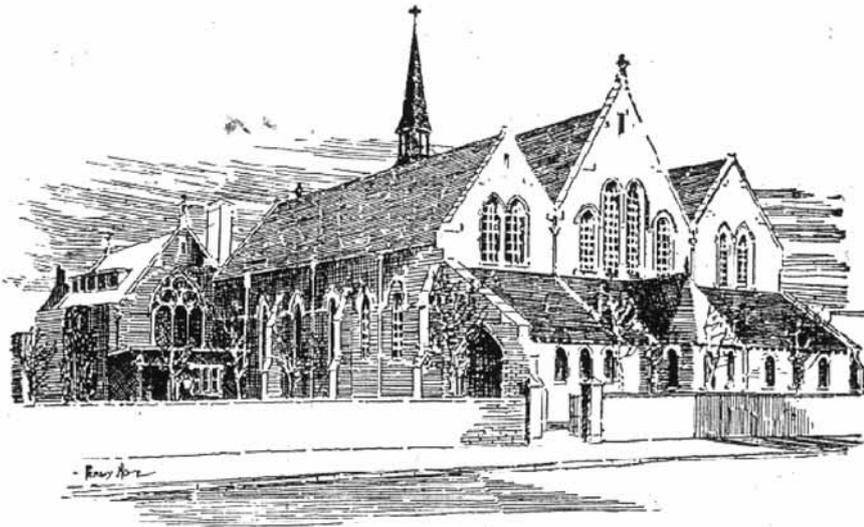
HIGHBURY COMMUNITY NEWS

www.highburycommunity.org

No 51 May 2007

Monsell Road Street Party!

By Catriona Coulter



ST THOMAS CHURCH, FINSBURY PARK

BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY, 7th May, will see the return of the second annual May Day Street Party, hosted by the congregation of St Thomas the Apostle, Finsbury Park. This fun, family event will be held in the church hall and on the street outside, in the afternoon, from 2pm until 5 pm.

The end of Monsell Road, next to the church, will be closed to traffic, with permission from Islington Council, and stewards will be on hand to ensure safety and direct traffic around the block as necessary. The idea behind the Street Party is to provide a fun afternoon with something for everyone living locally, regardless of age, background or beliefs. It is not a "religious" event and it is definitely not limited to the residents of Monsell Road, who are generously accommodating us. In fact, if you are reading this article, you, your family, friends and neighbours are all

cordially invited!

This year's Street Party will build on the success of last year's event, which was enjoyed by hundreds of local people, many of whom have no connection to St Thomas's whatsoever. In fact, the Party is back by popular demand as many visitors asked us if we will do it every year. We would like to!

Many of last year's attractions will be back, with a bouncy castle and football penalties for active kids and facepainting and various craft activities for quieter moments. The Tug-of-War challenge will be played out again, as the kids continue to show the grown-ups who's boss. A new contest for this year will involve the use of space hoppers, and there will also be paintball target practice for added colour!

If all this excitement gets too much, there will be lots of refreshments to keep you going, both at the indoor café and the street barbecue outside.

Anyone who has visited the St Thomas's tea tent at the Gillespie Park Festival or who has sampled the cakes and baked goodies on occasional match day sales will know that, thanks to the highly international flavour of our congregation, St Thomas's can serve up a wide range of fabulous and delicious food, which is always very good value for money.

There will be plenty for adults, too, with books, plants and produce for sale. Last year's range included cakes, jams and Highbury sloe gin – delicious! Here's to another great party – come and join us! ■

HCA donates computers

60 HIGHBURY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION MEMBERS raised an impressive £400 at this year's AGM, party and charity raffle/auction on Saturday, 21st April, held at Christ Church, Highbury Grove. So HCA can now fund Age Concern Islington to give free computers to Highbury residents. Five HCA members signed up on the night for a computer and some basic training. Three more are available. Many thanks are due to Raffle Master and Auctioneer, Tony Miller, for encouraging the friendly bidding battles. Grateful thanks also to our local shops and other donors for very generous and exciting prizes. Earlier, members heard an

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Highbury Writers: Charles Palliser

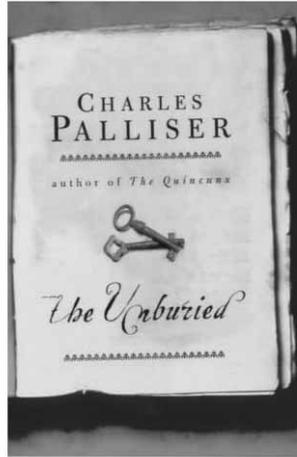
By Mark Mason

CHARLES PALLISER, author of acclaimed novel 'The Quincunx' has lived in Highbury since 1994. Charles had previously lived in Stoke Newington, which he found too remote and noisy, and was attracted to Highbury Hill because of its proximity to the Tube and the fact that it's what he describes as a 'quiet little island with the railway line protecting us from through traffic as it sweeps round from Finsbury Park to Drayton Park with no road crossing'. Charles likes the quiet environment it provides for his work, apart from on match days when he thinks that the chanting football crowds make the area unbearable. He also likes the village atmosphere and that people know each other, the tree lined streets, the big gardens and the proximity to Highbury Fields.

Born near Boston, Massachusetts in 1947, Charles Palliser taught literature at Strathclyde University in Scotland from 1974 to 1990. It was during this time that he wrote 'The Quincunx', which was published in 1989. Set in the early nineteenth century, the novel tells the story of John Huffam, cheated out of his inheritance, who gradually unravels his story whilst experiencing life at the fringes of society such as madhouses, prisons, the Yorkshire schools, London sewers and public executions. Written in the style of a Victorian novel by Wilkie Collins, it has sold over a million copies, in ten languages. It took Charles twelve years to write the novel and it is a long and complex read with multiple plots and sub-plots that require close attention. Thankfully, the Penguin paperback edition has

a supplement that traces out some of these puzzles.

Charles' next book, a modernist novella called 'The Sensationalist', was published in 1991 and was followed in 1994 by 'Betrayals', a mystery novel. These are both enjoyable reads, but failed to have the same impact as his first book.



THE UNBURIED BY CHARLES PALLISER

It was with the publication of 'The Unburied' in 1999, that Charles again achieved substantial literary acclaim. It took him two and a half years to write and is also in the style of a Victorian novel, but is much more than the Christmas ghost story it first appears to be. Set in the town of Thurchester in the 1881, it is the story of a visit by Dr Courtine, an unworldly academic, to an old friend who lives in the Cathedral close. The complex and atmospheric plot links murders over two hundred years apart, with a story line relating to the search for an ancient manuscript in the Cathedral library. It is available in paperback, published by Phoenix.

In addition to his four novels, Charles has written a stage play, 'Week Nothing' and a radio play, 'The Journal of Simon Owen', which was broadcast on Radio 4 in 1982.

Charles Palliser is currently working on a book for young people, with the title 'Wolf Summer', which is set in an Eastern European county in 1938. The story is about three children who get caught up in an attempt by Fascists to take over the country, and Charles describes it as 'the first political thriller for twelve year olds'. It sounds like it might be of interest to readers of all ages.■

(continued from page 1)

informative talk from Islington Council Recycling Manager, Matthew Homer. He invites you all to a Council 'Green Cleaner Day' on Highbury Fields on 15th May.

Issue 50 of HC News told you HCA was losing both its Secretary and Treasurer and was struggling with too few general committee members. 6 people responded to that call for new committee members, so the Highbury Community Association, with new faces and input, continues beyond its 10th Anniversary.

HCA, more easily again, will be able to represent people living and working in the Finsbury Park and Blackstock

Road area, since new committee members, James Hood and Christine Kaltoft, live there. This area has had many schemes, the Finsbury Park SRB being the grandest. The latest is FinFuture, a proposed action plan for Blackstock Road, which consists mainly of small retail outlets. Islington and Hackney councils are responsible for the road, causing lack of consistency. The HC News Team is strong with 5 committee members leading it. Trevor Wilson is working on an HCA Online Forum. Check the HCA website for news of this.

Email: hcanews@hotmail.com Visit www.highburycommunity.org ■

HIGHBURY
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OFFER

Computers provided by Age Concern Islington and funded by HCA are available to 3 more Highbury residents over the age of 50.

Ring Christine Kaltoft,
HCA Treasurer

Tel: 7704 2337

Confessions of a romance junkie

By Heidi Rice

If you mention romantic fiction to anyone who has never read it you usually get an embarrassed expression or a joke about 'mucky books'. If you then mention you're a Mills and Boon



HEIDI RICE by Lynn Herrick

author non-romance readers will instantly conjure up a picture of Barbara Cartland in her pink frills and

spidery eyelashes, petting her Pekinese dogs and dictating her purple prose at a rate of knots. With no disrespect to Barbara — who still has lots of fans and whose books I've never read so I couldn't comment on them — as a newly published Mills and Boon author, I'd like to set the record straight.

My name's Heidi Rice, I've lived in Highbury for the last 10 years, been a film reviewer for 15 years and a romance junkie for a whole lot longer. My first Mills and Boon novel *Bedded by a Bad Boy* is out this April in their Modern Romance Extra line (the Extra stands for 'extra sensual', just in case the title didn't give it away) — and I swear I've never owned a Pekinese dog or worn a pink petticoat in my life. I will admit to the odd bit of purple prose, but only when the characters and the story demand it, you understand.

Getting published has been a dream come true for me — and that's not just because I can now earn a little bit of money from all my hard work.

Frankly, the process itself is a pleasure despite all the hard work. Whether I was published or not, there's nothing I find more enjoyable than sitting down at the computer keyboard, creating a gorgeous hero and a feisty heroine and then watching them strike sparks off each other until they find their way to true love. I expect non-romance readers are probably rolling their eyes at this point, but take it from those of us in the know, there's nothing more emotionally satisfying than reading a romance when the romance is well written. That means settings so vivid they leap off the page at you and characters with so much humour, guts and tenacity you can't help rooting for them even when they do diabolically daft things.

So what's so great about becoming a published author? Apart from the money (not nearly as much as you probably think), playing god with my characters and gazing at my book in Borders at the N1 Centre? I'll tell you, and I think this may be unique to the romance industry. It's the fantastically supportive community of writers (both published and unpublished) that I'm now a bona fide part of.

Don't get me wrong. This is a business and a hard-nosed one at that. Contrary to popular belief, not

just anyone can write a romance novel and get published. You have to love reading romance. You have to have a strong and distinctive 'voice' (i.e.: you can't just copy someone else's style). You have to know the market (the difference between paranormals and inspirationals, etc). You have to know about the craft of writing and you have to be prepared for rejection (sometimes, lots of it). But if you've got all that, or you're prepared to learn, then there are organisations out there (most of them run by romance writers and readers) who will get you started and support you all the way to the bookshop shelves and beyond.

My biggest tip for anyone who wants to go for it would be to



join Britain's Romantic Novelists' Association and their New Writer's Scheme (find details on the web at www.rna-uk.org) and the Romance Writers of America (www.rwanational.org).

Harlequin's website in the US (www.eharlequin.com) has tips for budding authors and can tell you how to submit your manuscript if you've already got one in your desk drawer. And last, but by no means

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Overcrowding at Highbury Square

By Francis Radice

ARSENAL FC [operating as Highbury Holdings], who own the Highbury Square development, have put in a planning application for 20 units to add to the 711 units already approved in 2005. The original application was for 557 units in 2001. The latest increase follows the withdrawal of the Islington Health Trust from the proposal to install a clinic, which was of course, one of the 'benefits' to the community put forward in 2001 as a reason for allowing the Stadium, and all the plans. From the point of view of sheer overcrowding and a decline in the quality of life for all living nearby, this is a very bad application.

There some planning grounds to use to persuade the Council to reject it. It is, however, under pressure from the London Plan authorised by Ken Livingston to maximise every opportunity to increase housing in the borough. After Southwark (29,530) and Lambeth (28,900), Islington comes third with its projected target over the next 15 years of 18,070 living units. The figure for the Greater London Area is 336,000 or 22,400 per year. These figures are based on population growth projections, not on current shortages.

The London Mayor's policies

are based on a passive attitude to development and the projected population increase by up to 800,000 by 2016. (The total GLA population is 7,515,000.) The LP lists 'areas of intensification' – a favourite word in the document – and among them is Holloway/ Arsenal. We have already seen the results of this policy.

There are several objections. One is to the density increase to 498 habitable rooms per hectare, way beyond Council Unitary Development Plan guidelines [UDP] and beyond the maximum laid down in the London Plan for this neighbourhood, of 450 HR/HA. The lack of family sized units and the removal of the community benefit, are another two. Also Islington has already met its target for this year, as proposed in the London Plan. Further the installation of the new flats leads to a distinct loss of quality of housing, (also mentioned in the LP), in the immediate vicinity. More Flat dwellers will bring even more cars into the area. And of course, Islington is already the second most densely populated borough in the country with very little green space.

To object write to Duncan Brown, Islington Council, PO Box 3333, 222 Upper Street,

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N1 1YA as soon as possible.

Duncan.brown@islington.gov.uk. Copy your letter to hcanews@hotmail.com. ■

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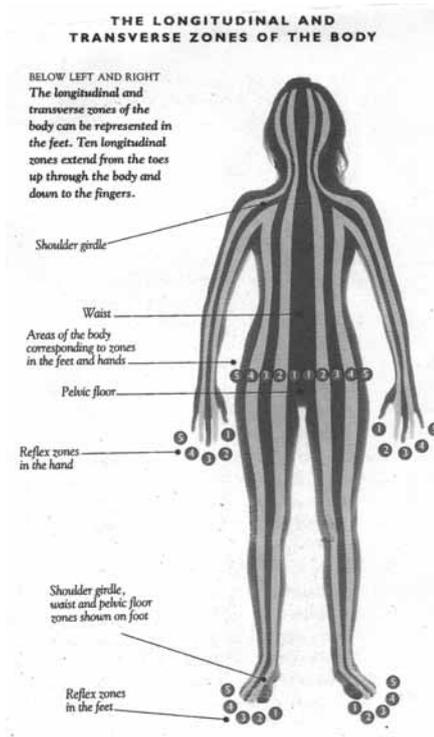
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Reflexology

By Maureen Evans

TOUCH THERAPIES (or touchy-feely as they are often known) are growing in popularity. The one to one communication which Reflexology offers, has big advantages in stimulating the healing process. I know that patients treated with reflexology feel better and enjoy a new-found mental and physical relaxation, so touch-feely is working for many people. My own experience is that I had a one-off reflexology treatment out of curiosity and, if you pardon the pun, it was the best step I ever took. I didn't quite understand the connection between having my feet pressed and feeling so amazingly



good, until I decided to find out more for myself. I am now a qualified practitioner and have total personal and professional belief in the feeling of wellbeing provided by this wonderfully relaxing therapy. Try it yourself and see!

Reflexology involves the treatment of various disorders by applying pressure to the feet or hands. Precise areas of the feet and hands

relate to particular parts of the body and the whole body can be treated via points on the feet and hands, which are called "reflex areas" or zones. Ten longitudinal zones extend from the feet up the legs and up the body to the head, and down the arms to the hands. There are five zones on the right side of the body, and five on the left. Zone 1 connects the big toe with the thumb. Treatment involves applying pressure to the precise reflex points with the tip of the thumb or fingers. The pressure applied is firm but not heavy. Different sensations will be felt by the person receiving treatment, in different areas of the feet, or body. The different sensations can be interpreted by the therapist to indicate which parts of the body are working well, and which are not. Reflexology is also used as a diagnostic technique to discover the location of imbalances in the body. Like all complementary therapies, reflexology offers patients time to talk about themselves. This gives the practitioner a better understanding of the patient and his/her problems and lifestyle, and can be therapeutic in itself.

HIGHBURY CHAMBER CHOIR



20th Anniversary Concert

At St Thomas' Church, St Thomas' Road, London N4

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Reflexology can help many conditions. One of the most common reasons for ill health being stress. The effects of city living, pollution, additives and pesticides in our food, all play a part. The physical problems that can result

(continued on page 6)

Dogs' mess on the school run

By Caroline Cooney

OUR WALK to school is so continuously and prolifically covered in dogs' mess that I was able to persuade the Area Manager for Environmental Street Issues, John Price, to do the school walk with us. Although half the problem is the difficulty in ensuring dog owners clean up after their dogs, the other problem is that, once it is there, the street sweepers are supposed to clear it up.

John Price was horrified to find that this is obviously not happening. He wants to hear from everyone who has the problem of walking their children to school through and around dogs' mess that is being ignored by the sweepers. Email him to find out which days your streets are meant to be cleaned and if ALL the dogs' mess is not cleared away on those days, he wants to know. If he cannot stop dog owners from leaving it there, he can make sure it is cleared away. It is not a pleasant job to do the sweeping, but it is part of their job and if not done, our school walk becomes unpleasant and stressful.

So, if you are fed up of constantly manoeuvring your children around the mess, or cleaning it off their shoes, then do email John Price, as many times as you have to. He wants to be made aware of the full extent of the problem, and cannot help if not informed. Let's hope it makes a difference. ■

John Price : john.price@islington.gov.uk

(REFLEXOLOGY continued from page 5)

from stress include headaches and migraines, tension in the neck, backache, digestive disorders, a weakened immune system, high blood pressure, skin conditions, and frequent colds and infections. Reflexology can help us cope better with stress and be more relaxed. Very importantly, the person is treated as a whole and not as a group of symptoms. Patients describe the feeling after a treatment as "a natural high", "feeling light", "feeling of tranquillity" which when put simply is "good energy". Feeling better psychologically induces an improved sense of wellbeing, which can also reduce stress levels and prevent further illness. So, patients use reflexology to treat particular

conditions but also in a preventative way, to maintain good health.

I trained at the British School of Reflexology and have since worked in private practice, in the health and leisure industries for many years. I am now in full-time practice at Canonbury Clinic. Canonbury Clinic (known as Canonbury Clinic of Osteopathy) is now a Natural Health Clinic offering not only Reflexology but also osteopathy, massage, homeopathy, acupuncture, hypnotherapy. www.reflexology-islington.co.uk
Email: stepforward@reflexology-islington.co.uk
Tel: Maureen Evans on 07950 804 734. ■

(CONFESSIONS continued from page 3)

least, there's Harlequin/Mills and Boon's UK website (www.millsandboon.co.uk) which has the same advice and, much more importantly, is currently selling my book at the knockdown price of £2.19.

So enough about me and how to get published. Now I'm going to plug my book.

As I've already mentioned Bedded by a Bad Boy is an extra sensual contemporary romance. It's mostly set on a seaside estate in Long Island and involves the tempestuous romance between feisty English girl Jessie Connor (fiery red hair and a temperament to match) who's set her heart on finding Mr Right, and Monroe Latimer (think Steve McQueen meets Johnny Depp by way of Sawyer in Lost), a drop-dead gorgeous Harley-riding American bad boy with a troubled past and a huge sign on him saying Mr Wrong But Completely Irresistible. Jessie spies Monroe having a skinny dip in her sister and brother-in-law's pool, thinks he's a trespasser (shock, horror, he's actually her brother-in-law's long-lost brother!) and decides to tackle him herself. . . It's a funny, sexy and remarkably quick read (at only 62,000 words) and I hope you'll give it a try. Hand on heart, I promise there's not a pink boudoir, spidery eyelash or pet Pekinese in sight.

If you want to know more about me, my road to publication or my second novel, The Mile High Club, which is due out in November, visit my website at www.heidi-rice.com. ■

Highbury Community Association The HCA represents 750 residents and businesses on all aspects of living and working in Highbury, Lower Holloway and Finsbury Park. Run by volunteers, it relies on donations. Send cheques to HCA Treasurer, c/o 83 Highbury Hill, N5 1SX, made out to 'Highbury Community Association'. Send letters or articles for next issue to hcanews@hotmail.com or HCA News, 83 Highbury Hill, N5 1SX. Visit www.highburycommunity.org
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