

Waterlow Park –

# Celebrating 125 years as a public park [1891-2016]

**Ceridwen Roberts, OBE, Co-Chair of Friends of Waterlow Park**



THIS YEAR, FRIENDS of Waterlow Park [FoWP] are celebrating the 125th Anniversary of the opening of the park to the public in a number of ways. The biggest event is "Lark in the Park" – Waterlow 125 - on Saturday 17th September to which all park users and Highgate residents are invited.

Celebration is doubly important as public parks are under serious threat from Central Government cuts to local authorities. Camden is working hard to protect its parks and we need to show maintaining parks matters.

Waterlow Park will be the setting for an anniversary Village Fête echoing the events of the opening day in 1891. It will get off to a spectacular start with a brass band - led procession of school children from Highgate's six primary schools bringing gifts of plants to the Park. The plants will be planted in a commemorative flowerbed using the winning design submitted by one of the local six primary schools.

Over 50 descendants of Sir Sydney Waterlow are flying in from around the world to attend this event. His great great grandson, Sir Christopher Waterlow will be joined at the opening by Lord Avebury, a descendent of Sir John Lubbock, who opened the park on behalf of the

LCC which originally looked after the park. Other guests include, the Chief Commoner of the City of London representing the Lord Mayor of London and the Master of the Worshipful Company of Stationers, [Sir Sydney had been both the Lord Mayor of London and Master of the Stationers] and The Mayor of Camden, as Camden is now the trustee of the park, responsible for its upkeep.

The day will feature traditional fête attractions such as stalls selling local produce, a tombola, lucky dip and Human Fruit Machine. To echo the original fete there will also be a number of Victorian funfair stalls – such as Ball in the Bucket and a Coconut Shy and children's games from that era. One of the many highlights will be the performance of six short plays on the history of the park and Sir Sydney. These have been written by a former Highgate primary head and will be performed by the six Highgate schools. As part of a programme to help children appreciate the importance of protecting this beautiful green space, a series of activities have been planned by FoWP with talks by Sir Christopher and local historian Pam Cooper on the history of the park as well as talks on bees, birds and bats. The children have also been growing sunflowers for the park's kitchen garden. Musical entertainers will perform throughout the afternoon to ensure a festive atmosphere. FoWP stress this will be a local event with local stalls.

Lark in the Park is from 12pm to 5pm on Saturday, 17th September. It is a free event, sponsored by Goldschmidt & Howland. Do come! [waterlowpark.org.uk](http://waterlowpark.org.uk), @waterlowpark, facebook Waterlow Park.

## A Farewell To Arms at the French Circle

**by Jane Campbell and Ruth Hazeldine**

AU MOIS DE mars, j'ai eu le plaisir de présenter quatre films français. "Ridicule" (1996), dirigé par Patrice Leconte, est un film spirituel dont l'histoire se déroule dans la cour « ridicule » de Louis XVI. Puis deux extraits, de "Jean de Florette" et "Manon des Sources" (1999), adaptés des romans de Marcel Pagnol et tournés par Claude Berri, montrant la vie des paysans au Sud Ouest de la France dans les années trente. L'histoire du quatrième film "Lacombe Lucien" (1974) de Louis Malle a lieu sous le régime de Vichy. Un jeune paysan est attiré par les actes honteux des collaborateurs. Ces extraits ont été très appréciés. Les films sont disponibles dans la bibliothèque du coin !

To round out our season we were privileged to have a

reading from the diaries of Sister Edith Appleton, known as Edie, by her great-nephew Dick Robinson. Edith had been a nurse in the battle trenches of WWI and her diary (translated into French by Dick) recounts in simple but moving language the suffering of the wounded and the emotions of a young English nurse treating them. A power-point presentation brought the story vividly to life.

The book is entitled A Nurse at the Front; for more details contact Dick Robinson at [dick@gardencottage.org.uk](mailto:dick@gardencottage.org.uk)

We recommence on September 7 but between now and then we will be celebrating the Prise de la Bastille together with the 50th anniversary of the Highgate Society with a special party on July 14th. A bientôt!