



Balmain

Patrons: Margaret Throsby & Bruce Spence

# Bookworm

The newsletter of the Friends of Balmain Library

No 37 March 2009

## The Curtain Goes Up and Our New Library Opens

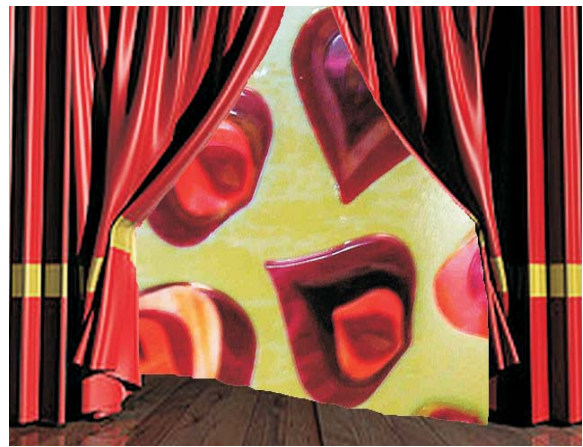
From Monday March 16 our newly refurbished and enlarged library facility shall re-open to borrowers! The FOBL committee had a special “sneak preview” early this month, and despite having been involved throughout the whole process – initial consultation, planning meetings, draft and final proposals, and even discussion of the colour schemes – we could not have envisaged the reality of the extra space, nor the huge improvement in the layout and function of our library. Some of the benefits that were immediately apparent were: the wireless computer access in all areas; various quiet reading and study areas; a new local history section in the reference area; an entirely separate children’s section with outdoor decking; and a new, secure after-hours returns deposit box on the side of the Town Hall building.

Mayor of Leichhardt, Jamie Parker, will cut the ribbon on its opening day – with the official opening function (by invitation only) being held in Balmain Town Hall’s auditorium on Thursday March 19. Then on Sunday, March 22 the library shall hold a special open day and courtyard barbecue – not a day for borrowing or returning books – as an introduction and orientation to all the new services and facilities that are available. Other events are planned, so keep an eye on notices in the sparkling new foyer.

Although still requiring some finishing touches, such as installation of computer terminals, plus some additional furniture for the children’s section, Leichhardt Library’s Manager, Marilyn Taylor, is confident all will be ready for the proposed opening date.

But wait ... there’s more! Danielle Sellers’ window designs add a unique dimension to the west wall of the children’s area – and as winner of FOBL’s art glass design competition she can be truly proud of the result of her efforts. To commemorate this installation, and to formally present Danielle with her prize, FOBL is hosting an evening in the renovated and up-graded Meeting Room behind the Balmain Town Hall.

Additionally, Marilyn Taylor has offered to open the library specially for this event - so that everyone will



have an opportunity to view the windows *in situ*, and enjoy our beautiful new facility in the relative peace and quiet of an ‘after hours’ tour.

Accordingly, we would like to invite all members and friends to join us on **Friday, March 27 at 7 pm** for the official window “opening”, and to meet with Danielle. In addition, there will be a small display of works by other students of the Sydney College of the Arts, and a talk by Jane Gavan – senior lecturer in the Glass Faculty. Drinks and nibbles will, of course, be provided during the proceedings.

On this occasion, for the purposes of catering, we would appreciate an RSVP from those intending to join us for this special FOBL event. Please either send an email ([friendsbalmainlibrary@gmail.com](mailto:friendsbalmainlibrary@gmail.com)) or drop an envelope into the post with your name and the number attending to:

Friends of Balmain Library Inc  
C/- Balmain Library  
PO Box 45  
Leichhardt NSW 2040

We very much look forward to seeing you all on Friday 27 March for this our first official function in the newly air-conditioned (heated in winter), re-carpeted, re-painted and re-illuminated Meeting Room – and to celebrate the complete renovation of our library!

# Introducing Chris Giles

In her latest book, *Births Deaths Marriages*, Georgia Blain makes a prosaic but accurate observation that: “The ordinary that we hold up for public viewing can always be mined to reveal layers of the extraordinary” (p.9). During the course of my interview with Branch Librarian Chris Giles, this most certainly proved to be the case.

From a very early age, Chris loved to read. A particular favourite, Enid Blyton’s *Magic Faraway Tree*, took this tomboy from Ryde into an imaginary space that subsequently set her on a path of travel and adventure. But first there was education: Ryde High School, then Sydney University on a Teachers’ College scholarship to study French and German. Chris lasted three months. University life was “boring, too formal, and not stimulating” so she took up a position at Ryde Library. Three years later, she packed her bags and headed off to Queensland. It proved to be just the beginning of a long period of travel.

To support herself, and save money, Chris took a job as a “house mouse”, the term used on Dunk Island for a housemaid. Later, she packed tiger prawns in Cairns and worked in a plywood factory near Tully, but always with an eye to moving on to greater adventures. It was during this time that Chris found a partner who shared her desire to see the world and, together, they set off on board a 30 ft home-built wooden ketch – first to the Barrier Reef, Thursday Island and Darwin, and then on to Africa via the Cocos-Keeling Islands and Mauritius. Eight years later, and now on the other side of the world after stints in the French West Indies and Brazil, Chris decided to come home.

Eight years of travel, with only one short visit back home, has to be funded somehow. Handicrafts, textiles and jewellery from South Africa, Bolivia and Brazil were purchased, then sold for profit at ports along the way. Male crew members repaired boats in Durban and worked as carpenters on building sites. Chris helped run a water sports business in St Martin, teaching tourists to sail on 15 foot catamarans and wind surf, and sailed snorkellers to other islands. Running charters and renting beach chairs and umbrellas brought in some income too. It was a peripatetic and exciting life, but Chris began to feel a need to put down roots and establish herself better for the future.

Back home, and feeling the cold (a condition that continues to this day!), a library assistant position came up at Leichhardt, Chris accepted the job, and embarked on part-time study through Charles Sturt University, leading to the qualification Bachelor of Library and Information Science. Over twenty years, Chris has worked in various positions and at every branch of the Leichhardt Library system. But she has always felt a special connection with Balmain as her father grew up



in Longview Street and worked as a boilermaker at Cockatoo Island. Chris well remembers childhood visits to her grandparents’ home and has a strong sense of belonging to the Balmain Peninsula.

Somewhat surprisingly, after such a long period at sea and living on boats, Chris’s spare time is filled with land-based pursuits. Bush-walking, horse-riding, tennis, jogging, and generally keeping fit, occupy her spare time these days. Blues and folk music, and discovering interesting corners in the Sydney area, are also on her radar. And of course travel: friends met in the Caribbean were mostly from other places too, and Chris has caught up with them during a long stint in Europe. Future plans include Ireland, the Caribbean and Brazil, but also Scandinavia, an area inspired by Chris’s reading – particularly the work of Henning Mankell.

*The Magic Faraway Tree* started it all and there is no doubt that Chris’s current favoured authors, such as Andrei Makine and Irene Nemirovsky, will see her travelling to Russia some time in the future. Biographies and crime fiction, particularly Kerry Greenwood’s Phryne Fisher series, are on Chris’s reading list. But travel writing still holds her in thrall, particularly those books describing the incredible difficulties encountered by intrepid female travellers of times past.

In the meantime, Chris is looking forward to the challenges ahead. Our newly expanded and refurbished Library will give staff the opportunity to provide Balmain and the wider community with a service befitting the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.





# Ex Libris

With Branch Librarian Chris Giles



## Introducing Balmain Library's New Staff Member

**B**almain Library staff are very lucky to have a new team member for the library service. We would like to welcome Michelle Cinquetti to the Balmain Library staff. Michelle joined our team on 2 March as Library Technician – Children's Services – Balmain Library. Michelle's bright and bubbly personality is a perfect fit for children's services.

Books and reading have been a passion of Michelle's since childhood and she looks forward to sharing that passion with Balmain Library patrons of all ages. Apart from children's literature, Michelle's main reading interests are history, politics, biography and literary fiction.

Michelle has lived in the Municipality most of her adult life, but is a relative newcomer to the world of libraries. She has worked at Leichhardt Library since finishing her Diploma in 2007, most recently as the acting Young Adult Library Technician and assistant to the Children's Librarian. Re-establishing Children's Services and programs at Balmain Library, and becoming a member of our team, are keenly anticipated by Michelle.

Speaking of children's services, a popular children's activity was initiated last year by Karen Johnson, Children's Librarian, Leichhardt Libraries. Karen has a special passion for writing, and developed a winter writing competition for a story or poem of maximum 1000 words for ages 7-9, 10-11, 12-14 and 15-18.



Emma Tucker, eligible for the 10-11 year old category in the competition, submitted a story and below is her prize-winning entry.

## Trouble in Winter

These two events took place in different parts of the world. Out of the trouble in both cases, came some good.

One day a girl called Amanda was walking down the streets of London when she saw a black bird, caught in one of the high trees. Amanda decided to climb up the tree to fetch the black bird. Amanda was just about to reach up and grab it when she slipped on an icy branch. She fell down and cut her knee just as the black bird got away. Amanda hopped home and cried herself to sleep. When Amanda's mum came home she was more upset than Amanda was because now there was blood running all the way down her leg. "But mum I don't get it. How did the bird fly away? I thought the bird was firmly caught."

One Saturday morning Chin Chin was walking down the streets of China. He was coming home from soccer practice when he caught a cold but Chin Chin had no idea. When he got home his mother asked how soccer was. "It was great" he said. "There's going to be a game on next Saturday and I'm in it again. I feel sorry for Ming though. She never gets a go because the coach only lets the boys play in the games, but if I can't come then she will take my place."

A week passed and it was time for the big game but Chin Chin couldn't go because he had a really bad cold. "I'm sorry but you can't go" said his mum. "But please I'm fine let me go" said Chin Chin. "No is the answer I guess Ming will have to take our place." So Chin Chin missed out on the big game. On Monday his friend came and said "We won!!! But it's all because of Ming. Who knew she was such a good soccer player?"

The good thing is that they both helped someone ... Chin Chin let Ming finally have a go. Amanda helped the bird (when she fell she shook the branches which made the twigs loose and now the bird is free).

*Emma Tucker*

*Balmain Bookworm*  
Editor: Herma Sieper

*Design and Layout:*  
Propaganda/goose

# A Word From The Chair *Mariella Totaro-Genevois*



It is really great to start this address by stating that Balmain Library will be open for business on March 16 – and the official opening by Jamie Parker, Mayor of Leichhardt Council on March 22..

FOBL, our lively association, has special reasons to celebrate this occasion because 2008 was a year of anxiety and uncertainty as the Town Hall big project of refurbishment was begun and progressed. Because of this, last year FOBL had to find alternative venues for its meetings and functions; but notwithstanding the limitations imposed by the situation, business went on almost as usual, a fact proved by the calendar of past activities and functions.

For instance in May, Jane Ward, former president of The Balmain Association and passionate advocate in political and crucial issues for the local community, gave a talk offering FOBL members very interesting insights into the topic *What Makes a Community?*

The following two months were dedicated to organizing the Glass Windows Competition. Our \$6000 project, open to students at the Sydney University College of the Arts, implied designing the glass windows to be donated to the children's section of Balmain's refurbished Library. The rules had to be set, contacts with the Council established, a panel of judges formed and so on. In August the judging took place and, in our function on the 15<sup>th</sup> of that month, the winner was officially announced as Danielle Sellers, a young artist and student of Sydney College of the Arts. FOBL members will be able to see the wonderful result of this project by visiting their refurbished library.

Meanwhile your Committee was working on another project. The idea was to present Balmain Library with a software program called YOUTUTOR on line. This program allows students from years 6 to 12 to access online teachers, to help them overcome problems they might be experiencing in their various school subjects. This program is already being used successfully in several libraries in NSW, however it is expensive and before purchasing it FOBL needed a guarantee that if and once it was started it would attract sufficient financial support from the Leichhardt Library to be continued. For several reasons, the response to this request has been negative so far, however there is still a chance that these difficulties may be overcome.

In September a function for mums and kids was organised, with a knowledgeable speaker Vivienne Hatton of Book Council invited to talk. Lots of donated children's books in excellent condition were available both for exchange or simply to take home. However, maybe because of the venue where parking isn't easy, or other circumstances beyond our control, it was FOBL members rather than mums and kids, who ended up enjoying an interesting conversation with the invited guest who, luckily for us, had a great sense of humour and seemed unfazed by the absence of an audience. I mention this to show how the lack of appropriate premises has played an important role in the year of anxiety, 2008.

It was because of this previous experience that a lot of work went into publicising the October function, where author Maggie Hamilton spoke about her new book *What is happening to our girls?* But in this case attendance was good and money was raised for the Library.

Another important thing to mention is that, in October, the Open Book Group celebrated its first year of very successful existence. Gillian O'Mulloy and Jan Aitkin could give you more details about this initiative. Jan and Gillian are FOBL's committee members, however this being the first *Bookworm* for 2009, it seems appropriate to mention and wish a fruitful 2009 to all the members of the FOBL Committee.

It was a pleasure to return to the refurbished small meeting room in the library for our March committee meeting. As usual, Marilyn Taylor, Leichhardt Library Manager, joined us and reported on the final touches being put into place before opening in two weeks. Throughout the previous year, Marilyn has kept us informed about issues relating to Balmain Library, and has patiently answered our invariable question: "Are we there yet?"

Well my dear friends, I will conclude by saying that if 2008 was the year of anxiety, we seem to have managed quite well. It is my view now that we can confidently look forward to a vibrant and stimulating 2009 for all the Friends of Balmain Library.

# Open Book Group

**F**OBL's *Open Book Group* held its first meeting for 2009 in February - getting off to a flying start with *The Vanishing Act of Esme Lennox* by Maggie O'Farrell. Popular author Joanna Trollope's novel *Brother and Sister* followed in March.

The group has been running now for 15 months and has gone from strength to strength with new members joining us each month. "Open" is the operative word in the format of this group. While there is a hard core attending every month, there is no obligation to do so. Members are welcome to come to any meeting they wish and so can balance work, family and other commitments without that guilty feeling of letting the side down. The result is that the discussions take all sorts of turns depending on who is there.....there is no second guessing the opinions of this group.

Conversation is always lively and interesting. Last year several books, notably *Breath* by Tim Winton and Helen Garner's *The Spare Room*, polarised the group by challenging our original thoughts and ideas. *Infidel* by Ayaan Hirsi Ali was unanimously commended, but the myriad of issues it raised again promoted a wide variety of viewpoints. *Mr Pip*, Lloyd Jones's prize-winning novel, captured our hearts with its writing, while *How Proust Can Change Your Life* by Alain de Botton gave us an amusing and informative insight into this great philosopher without having to tackle his original opus.

We also enjoyed books by Ian McEwan, Alex Miller, Ohan Pamuk, Khaled Hosseini, Markus Zusak and Geraldine Brooks.

There is a Moderator for each meeting and once the book has been reviewed all have the opportunity to socialise over some light refreshments. Books are

chosen from suggestions by members, and there is no charge – just the expectation of enthusiastic participation.

Below is the programme of reading selected for 2009. So please feel free to join us.....we are always "Open".

Book	Date
<i>The Vanishing Act of Esme Lennox</i> , Maggie O'Farrell	February 10
<i>Brother and Sister</i> , Joanna Trollope	March 10
<i>The Household Guide to Dying</i> , Debra Adelaide	April 14
<i>The Lieutenant</i> , Kate Grenville	May 12
<i>Stasiland</i> , Anna Funder	June 9
<i>The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society</i> , Mary Anne Schaffer/Annie Barrows	July 14
<i>Midnight in Sicily</i> , Peter Robb	August 11

The Friends of Balmain Library Open Book Group currently meets every second Tuesday of the month at 1.00 pm, at the Hannaford Centre, 608 Darling Street, Rozelle.

**Important Change:** Meetings will be held at Balmain Library from April 2009.

For further information please contact Gillian O'Mulloy (9818 5951), Jan Aiken ( 9810 1862) .... Email [friendsbalmainlibrary@gmail.com](mailto:friendsbalmainlibrary@gmail.com)

## 2009 Actors' Forum Program

**B**almain is fortunate to, once again, have staged, performed, readings by professional actors in a program of five plays. *Bookworm* is out too late to publicise the first play, which is a pity as it was Donald MacDonald's popular *Caravan*.

However, as you will see from the list below, the remaining four will not disappoint. All performances are in the Mayflower Hall of St Andrew's Congregational Church, Cnr Curtis Rd and Darling Street, Balmain. Tickets at \$20 and \$15 concession, are available at the door one hour prior to performance

time – 2 pm on Sundays. It would be an idea to mark the following dates in your diary:

MAY 31... *Dinner with Friends* by Donald Margulies  
 JULY 19... *I Ought to be in Pictures* by Neil Simon  
 SEPT 20... *Soulmates* by David Williamson  
 OCT 11... *Love Child* by Joanna Murray-Smith

Note: Copyright issues are not quite finalised for *I Ought to be in Pictures* so please check programs which will be available in the Balmain Library prior to scheduled performance dates.

# Reading and Kids

The origin of this survey is an after-dinner conversation with a friend, who enjoys provoking me even when I have cooked a super meal. He remarked that books are becoming obsolete. In his view the younger generations, breast-fed by the Internet, are increasingly snubbing reading, which to them is more suited to 'the oldies'. In the future, he said (generating my fury), *your* books will be found only in antique shops.

So I decided to carry out a personal experiment. I made a list of four basic questions about reading and, within a couple of weeks all my *grandchildren*, and that is the next-next generation (Y-X-W or whatever they are called) had been duly grilled.

My research doesn't carry any 'scientific' value (of course) – but Bookworm readers might like it. The children's responses haven't been modified or edited: I have just transcribed what they said to me.

According to the answers of five out of the six young people interviewed, reading is a source of great entertainment and enjoyment. It offers a diversion to everyday life, "[reading] is like stepping in another dimension'. In other words, books provide food for their imagination. And isn't this the characteristic that all of us – regardless of the letter designating our generation – really look for?

If that is the case I told myself, if across generations we have such shared need and passion then it's unlikely that the book, this marvellous instrument created by human beings, will cease to be part of our world in the future.

## The Questions

1. Do you like reading?
2. Why yes /no?
3. What type of book appeals more to you?
4. If you can choose, would you rather read a book or play on the computer?

## The Answers

**ALLEGRA** (6 years old)

1. I love reading. Reading is one of my favourite-favourite things to do!
2. I like it because it is really good and also fun
3. Adventure books are my favourite, they are the best, because... because they make me feel as if I am in the adventures in the book.
4. I prefer to read a book. When I play computer my eyes get tired and also Mummy says that I get cranky after computer games... but I am happy and relaxed if I read a book.

**SEAN** (11 years old)

1. No, I don't.
2. Because it is hard for me to follow what happens, I can't concentrate and I get upset.
3. At the moment I like, but just a bit, books about mythology, with all those Gods... and also stories about the Romans or Egypt. Things that happened a long time ago.
4. I prefer to play on the computer where I can see and do things and I can draw the characters ...When I grow up I will get ideas from the books and then I will create fantastic computer games.

**HARRY** (12 years old)

1. Yeahhhhh...Of course I like reading!
2. Why? Because I like to be away from this world and be in whatever world the book is set in.
3. I love comedy, I mean funny and clever books, stories that really make you laugh
4. It depends on how engrossed I am in the book I am reading. If I am, I will keep reading. If it was just a random book, than I prefer to play on the computer.

**CAMMY** (9 years old)

1. Yes, definitely yes.
2. Because I have fun when I read and also because I can do it when I am bored
3. I like funny books, funny stories especially if they are impossible. I like all stories, it doesn't matter who is in the story, whether it is my age or not.
4. Read a book, because I can lie down and be cosy and comfortable and enjoy the story.

**STEVE** (19 years old)

1. Yes! Very much since I was about 8 years old. Before then I was really reticent about reading, but when I started I became hooked.
2. While you read you are in a dimension of its own, it is like stepping into another world.
3. Until one or two years ago it used to be fantasy stuff, but now I definitely prefer real adventure stories of all kinds.
4. Read a book by far! It is much more appealing and relaxing for me.

**ROSIE** (20 years old)

1. I love reading, you know it! Fancy asking me about this!
2. It is the best way to escape the real world, and also learning things I am interested in.
3. My preferences... Well, believable fiction first, some crime stories, but I can't stand science fiction. Also, I have fun with guides on how to do things. However sometimes I change my mind about books, and read different stuff. And yes I read everyday.



4. I dislike computers, definitely I prefer reading.
5. My attitude to reading has been sort of the same in time, except that now I get angry with people who do not read.

#### A HAPPY ENDING

A few days ago I received a phone call regarding Sean, the recalcitrant reader in my survey. It appears that during his January holidays, spent with his father in London, he was given a book called *Slam* by Nick Hornby. 'You won't believe it' the voice said on the phone 'but he was found still immersed in that book – with his i-pod unattended - almost two hours later! It has never happened before! He loved that story and has now asked for another book by the same author'

Mariella Totaro-Genevois 2009

**The Friends of Balmain Library  
Art Glass Event  
7 pm Friday, March 27 2009  
VENUE:  
Meeting Room  
Behind Town Hall  
Darling Street, Balmain  
Wine and light supper  
Free event – All welcome**

## Writers Tell Tales

“The true horror of what follows cannot be appreciated unless it is understood that all biographers live in fear of sharing their subject with a third party. The announcement of a biographer working on the same person as ourselves is worse than the interruption of a wedding by the appearance of a previously unheard-of spouse; worse than a rival appearing on the honeymoon and demanding conjugal rights”.

Thus Frances Wilson in an essay called 'The Love Triangle' in a collection called *Lives for Sale – Biographers' Tales*, edited by Mark Bostridge, gets off to a ripping start on her subject. There are some very juicy stories from biographers who have found out far too much about their subject person and caused havoc in the process.

This book teams well with *Mortification – Writers' Stories of their Public Shame*, edited by Robert Robertson. These

are short pieces by modern authors mainly based on the delicate nature of their egos and problems of public exposure. The quote in the book from Logan Pearsall Smith sums it up: "Every author, however modest, keeps a most outrageous vanity chained like a madman in the padded cell of his breast".

And Maggie O'Farrell leads off with this heartfelt note: "The room is tiny. There are no windows and as far as I know the door may be locked from the outside. On the miniature, doll-sized desk in front of me there are two pieces of chalk, a roll of gaffer tape and a razor blade. Strange acts have been committed here, by extremely small people. A man with a body odour problem has just come in and snapped a pair of excruciatingly tight headphones over my ears. I hate doing live radio."

Jan Aitkin

**Balmain Library Opening Times**  
Mon, Thurs, Fri – 9.30am-5.30pm  
Tues, Wed – 9.30am-8.00pm  
Saturday – 9.30am-4.00pm  
Ph: 9367 9211 ➤ Fax: 9367 9108

**PROPAGANDA**  
Rear 184 Glebe Point Road Glebe 2037



GAY KALNINS  
Phone: 02 9660 0037  
Fax: 02 9552 1714  
PO Box 161 Glebe 2037

Graphic Design ✕ Typesetting ✕ Desk Top Publishing ✕ Print Broker

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

FOBL members are notified of upcoming events by mail and email, if applicable.

If you are currently not receiving these emails, or have changed your email address, and would like to be included on the distribution list, please send your details to

Gillian O'Mulloy (Secretary, FOBL Committee) at

[friendsbalmainlibrary@gmail.com](mailto:friendsbalmainlibrary@gmail.com)

# The Pommies Abroad

It's probably not PC anymore to call people Yanks and Pommies, but my mother was a Pommy so I will persist. What brings this on, you may ask – well I just noticed that my recent ration of travel books were all written by Poms or those of Pommy extraction.

The first was really fun: *The Travels of a Fat Bulldog* by George Courtauld. The author is from the family whose name was synonymous with fabrics but George got away from the family business and became a part-time farmer and part-time Queen's Messenger – one of a team who take Her Majesty's letters to British embassies around the world. They were also known as 'silver greyhounds' but Lord Curzon, noting their plumpish figures, remarked that they were more like 'fat bulldogs'. Courtauld has a very droll wit and made a point of having as many adventures as he could while away – he counterpoints his weird travels with notes on daily life on his farm.

A really racy read but dealing with much darker material is *The Zanzibar Chest* by Aidan Hartley. It has a splendid cover and is subtitled 'A story of life, love and death in foreign lands'. Who could resist? Strictly speaking, Hartley was brought up in Africa but his family were of English origin. He is a journalist and well acquainted with the awfulnesses that have happened in Ruanda, Kenya etc. He writes with brutal candour about what he saw and what happened to him. For me it made me much more aware of the problems of post-colonial Africa.

Travelling back in time, I found an old Virago Traveller copy of *Untrodden Peaks and Unfrequented Valleys* by

Amelia Edwards. She was a great traveller and writer, and in the 1860s decided to explore the Dolomites (as you do) which had barely been mapped at that time. This quote will give you the flavour: 'You are the first travellers who have come up this way' remarks a road worker en route, astonished at the spectacle of two upright ladies making their way side-saddle along a mountain road which is about to give out. 'You must be Inglese!' Edwards is a good writer and a sharp observer, and this is possibly the only early account of the area.

Another intrepid Englishwoman was Margaret Brooke, the Ranees of Sarawak, whose book *My Life in Sarawak* details her life there with her husband the second Rajah.

She was clearly an intelligent woman and very liberal in her outlook towards the local people. She hastened to learn Malay, went on whatever trips were offering up the many rivers of the area, encouraged the local women to learn to read – all this while dealing with massive seasickness, a difficult climate full of malaria and other hazards, plus the death of several of her children. While much in praise of the Brooke regime in Sarawak, she is persuasive in her support of it and quite critical of the role of Britain as a colonial power.

And just for fun I will include the trilogy by Laurence Durrell on the antics of his 'hero' Antrobus, as a diplomat in the British Foreign Service. The books are *Sauve Qui Peut*, *Stiff Upper Lip* and *Esprit de Corps*. Skinny little books, fiction, and just what you need for a totally light and very funny read.

Jan Aitkin 2009

