

Queen Spark NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the October 2005 QueenSpark newsletter.

Once again we are pleased to offer you the chance to catch up on all of the news about our projects, and also to offer you many opportunities to get involved. This newsletter is distributed to all interested individuals and organisations concerned with the work of QueenSpark, and we hope that you enjoy the contents.

QueenSpark is a non-profit community publishing and writing organisation. We publish books about local people's lives, run creative writing groups and courses and facilitate oral history projects. For the last thirty years, QueenSpark has helped people in Brighton and Hove tell their stories.

Keep up to date in 2006 with the new QueenSpark Calendar on sale from early October price £7.50. Each month features one of the QS publications with photos and an extract from the book. Available from the QueenSpark office or via the website (see below). If ordering by post please add £2 for postage and packing.



NEWS

We are very pleased to announce that Buki Projects have joined QueenSpark in order to co-ordinate the Archive Project Education Pack. Over the next five months, they will be devising an accessible resource drawn from the 80-odd books that we have at QueenSpark, for use in all Brighton and Hove Primary and Secondary schools. To ensure that the final resource is properly targeted throughout the age ranges, they will be assisted by the formation of our new Teachers Advisory Group, which consists of around ten local teachers who will be piloting elements of the Pack with their children.

Backyard and Backstreet Brighton

We are currently researching into reprinting two of our most popular books, which were so successful that we have no copies left! *Backyard Brighton* and *Backstreet Brighton*, first issued some seventeen years ago in collaboration with the Lewis Cohen Urban Studies Centre (sadly now closed, although the style of their publications has

continued successfully as 'Brighton Books', who are collaborating with us on these reprints) tell a fascinating photo-text story of Brighton from the 1930s to the 1960s, focusing on houses that were demolished to make way for new development. We very much hope to have the books available in the next few months; call us on 01273 571710 or visit www.queensparkbooks.org.uk to check!

Contact details

QueenSpark, 49 Grand Parade, BN2 2QA

Telephone: 01273 571710

Websites:

www.queensparkbooks.org.uk
www.mybrightonandhove.org.uk

Director – John Riches

Email: john@queensparkbooks.org.uk

Administrator – Rosemary Turner

Email: rosemary@queensparkbooks.org.uk

Marketing & Readership – Sarah Hutchings

Email: sarah@queensparkbooks.org.uk

Education Archive Co-Ordinators:

Email: buki@queensparkbooks.org.uk

Join our yahoo discussion group by visiting
www.queensparkbooks.org.uk/contact.html
 and following the instructions.



Supported by the
Heritage Lottery Fund



One of the most exciting aspects of MyBH is that regular contributions from the public, and research conducted by our volunteer group, ensures that our already extensive digital archive of local history, and our visitor numbers, continue to grow. If you would like to find out about adding your memories to MyBH, contact jennifer@mybrightonandhove.org.uk for details and help.

In the coming months, visitors will be able to enjoy two new and very different sections which we hope will prove to be popular additions to the site.

'Scene and Heard' – co-ordinated by volunteers Louise and Morgan.

"We have interviewed people within the alternative scene, to find out about their experiences. The city is home to many different music scenes, which are a vehicle for self-expression. Because Brighton is so open, it's easy for people to fuse different kinds of music in their lives, and cross over into different scenes. For some people we spoke to, the way of dressing is as important as the music, while for others the music is the main thing. Brighton is a good place to move to because you can freely experiment with different styles without being judged or limited."

If you would like to find out how you can contribute to this project – contact sceneandheard@mybrightonandhove.org.uk



Paul – A psychedelic trance DJ - is one of the people interviewed as part of the Scene and Heard project

Brighton & Hove Allotments – co-ordinated by volunteer Simon Tobitt.

Simon tells us that his interest was sparked by looking over the fences of allotments *'around the city and seeing the sometimes tidy rows of vegetables and dahlias, and other times being greeted by some rather tumbledown sheds made out of old bits and pieces, with the allotments overgrown and rather wild.'* For the project he has interviewed a variety of individuals in order to find out about 'allotmenting'. In the process he has been given allotment gardening tips, gained an insight into the politics of organics, learned about the hidden wildlife of allotments and lots of other fascinating aspects. If you would like to find out how you can contribute to this project contact: info@mybrightonandhove.org.uk

Future plans for oral history training

MyBH's Interviewers' Group convenor Zoe Woods, has had a meeting with Kate Richardson from the History Centre at Brighton Museum. Kate is in charge of the oral history collection and is very keen on building a working partnership with MyBH. It is envisaged that in the future MyBH's interview material will be lodged with the museum for future wider public access. In early 2006 our volunteers will undergo a short training period with Kate. They will learn how to prepare transcripts and tapes so that they will be suitable for inclusion in the museum's oral history collection. If you are interested in finding out about the Interviewers' Group contact: info@mybrightonandhove.org.uk

And finally a poignant personal story

Every day emails come into the group from people all over the world. Many of them are from individuals trying to find information on relatives and ancestors. Recently we had a very unusual request from a gentleman in Canada who was looking for a grave. He knew from burial records that his grandparents were interred at St. Wulfran's Ovingdean, but despite searching through the churchyard on a recent visit, he was unable to find them. As I am the local editor for Ovingdean and have done extensive research there; I have a plan of the churchyard which notes the positions of each marker. The grave in question had weathered badly over the years and so the names couldn't be read (only at night with a torch). I went and took photographs of the stone and by digitally manipulating the image it was possible to read the inscription. Needless to say we received a very grateful thank you from Canada for those photos. A happy ending for him and MyBH.

OPPORTUNITIES TO VOLUNTEER FOR QUEENSPARK

VOLUNTEER EDITORS

The work will involve editing articles, short stories and reviews for our expanding website and working on Queenspark's forthcoming publications. Previous experience of editing work would be an advantage, but is not essential.

You need to have a flair and passion for either feature writing or editing, and an interest in the development of literature for and about Brighton & Hove. You will receive free registration to our forthcoming Editor's Course (normally £40).

BOOKSELLERS & MARKETING ASSISTANTS

We need volunteers to help run book stalls at local fairs and markets leading up to Christmas and in the new year. This would suit you if you are a local history enthusiast or book lover, who would enjoy working as part of a small team to help sell and market Queenspark publications at local events.

Ideally you would be outgoing and enthusiastic, good at working as part of a team, able to work on your own initiative, trustworthy and reliable, and able to generate creative bookselling ideas. For more information, please contact John Riches: john@queensparkbooks.org.uk (01273) 571710 or go to our website at www.queensparkbooks.org.uk

An early date for your 2006 Diary! On Wednesday 1st March QueenSpark will be hosting a major event at the Brighthelm Centre, from 7.30-9.30pm. The evening will be to mark the official launch of the Archive Project and the Education Pack, the Faith in Brighton project, the new 'Alt-Future' book, the upgraded My Brighton and Hove website, and the upgraded QueenSpark website and launch of the Online Bookstore. We would like all those associated with QueenSpark to attend, and, as the launch of the Archive will be the major event of the evening, we would particularly like to invite all those who, over the thirty-plus years of QueenSpark's history, have contributed to the creation of such wonderful publications. More details in the next newsletter, but if you know anybody who was involved over the years, get them to put it in their diary too!

Please return undelivered newsletters to:
Queenspark Books, 49 Grand Parade, Brighton BN2 9QA



WRITING GROUP DETAILS

QueenSpark is pleased to host a number of writing groups here at our base at 49 Grand Parade. If you are interested in joining any of these, please contact them direct.

Women Writers

Thursdays 10am-12 noon
Contact Claire Shelton-Jones
Tel. 505642

For women of all ages and outlooks. Small informal group reading our work: poetry, stories etc, engaging in constructive criticism and doing group writing exercises.

Club '94

Thursdays 2.30-4.30pm
Contact Simon Jenner
Tel. 01273 202876

'We're free-range writers with no pecking order'

A long established, dynamic group with a strong focus on poetry, offering detailed critique and constructive discussion. Whilst keen on publication and public readings, participation at any level is welcomed.

Novelist's Group

Thursdays 7.30-9.30pm
Contact Stephanie
Tel. 01273 727877

This enthusiastic group warmly welcomes would-be novelists at any stage. Anyone with work to share or an idea to discuss can be sure of direct and useful input.

Circus Street Writers

Having completed the CCE Creative Writing Certificate at the University of Sussex, we now meet bi-weekly on Wednesday evenings to exchange criticism and feedback and generally support one another in finishing our novels. We are not therefore looking for new members.

Writing course and Alt-future

Following on from our very successful publication, **Alt History**, QueenSpark are launching a new competition, **Alt-Future**, which will result in a book comprising fictional futures as imagined by the residents of the city.

- *Will Brighton and Hove become a 24-hour party city, with the beach turning into one giant barbecue?*
- *Will it one day be renamed Tesco's Brighton and Hove?*
- *Will the Seagulls win the Premiership?*
- *Will climate change lead to a giant skating rink between the piers?*
- *Will YOU become leader of the Council, and implement a new law banning mobile phone use in public places?*

You can submit stories, poems, illustrations, cartoons – anything that demonstrates your idea. Written entries can be anything from 50-3,500 words.

There are three age categories: Adult, 14-18, and 9-13 years old. £100.00 in book tokens will be shared between three winners, who will be published, alongside up to 15 others, in a new book in March 2006.

Entries must be received by Friday 9th December, by post to **Alt-Future**, QueenSpark, 49 Grand Parade, BN2 2QA, or emailed to john@queensparkbooks.org.uk. Please attach full name and address, age, daytime telephone number, and email address if you have one. Contributions may be edited before publication.

As always, we welcome submissions from people who haven't been published before.

If you would like some help developing your ideas

Queenspark are running two new courses associated with the competition.

Led by Isanna Curwen, the sessions will offer a supportive environment for people who want to develop plot, characterisation and narrative frameworks. The aim will be to develop initial ideas into entries into the competition. You do not need previous writing experience, just the enthusiasm to take part.

Course for 14-18 year olds: 5 sessions, Saturdays 10am-12 noon, starting 22nd October until 26th November (excepting 19th November). Cost 10.00, refundable on completion.

Course for adults: 5 sessions, Mondays 7-9pm, starting 24th October until 28th November (excepting 21st November). Cost: Waged 25.00; Unwaged (on proof of status) Free.

Sessions will take place at QueenSpark, 49 Grand Parade, BN2 9QA.

Email john@queensparkbooks.org.uk to reserve one of the ten places, or call 01273 571710.

Editors course

We are running a new Basic Editing Course early in the New Year. Anita Phillips, who will be leading the sessions, says *'The editor's job is to enhance the writer's voice and create readable and memorable texts from varied material.*

Volunteers will learn to shape prose by cutting superfluity while keeping the nugget of gold. Using published texts, we will do practical exercises dealing with style, character, plot, beginnings, endings, the basics of grammar and spelling, books and the internet.' This is the first stage in the formation of a new QueenSpark Editor's Group, which will aim to ensure that we can offer editing services to all of our contributors – whether written, audio or internet-based – as well as ensure that our output reflects a set of agreed standards. The course begins on Saturday 14th January, and will cost 40.00 for the eight weeks (free if you are unwaged, on proof of status). If you are keen to take part in the Editor's Group, and/or are part of the MyBrightonandHove group and want to use the course in conjunction with your involvement in the site, QueenSpark will pay your Course fees. Contact john@queensparkbooks.org.uk if you want to enrol!

Bangla Brighton

Available soon will be *Bangla Brighton – Voices of Brighton's Bengali Community*, our new book in collaboration with the Adult and Community Learners Unit at Brighton and Hove Council. Many members of the community have spent the last few months interviewing, writing, and recording their stories of when and how they first came to Brighton, the differences in lifestyle, how they adapted some of their customs, and their hopes for the future. Edited by Peter Oakes and designed by Amanda Stones, purchase details will be available in the next newsletter – but if you cannot wait until then contact us or check the website.

Faith project

The Faith in Brighton project is nearing conclusion, with only the editing of the videos still to take place. Once completed, the films and interviews from members of the Coptic, Progressive Jewish and Muslim communities will be featured on our (soon-to-be) revamped website, and published in the New Year.