



Humans have been unable to make progress without poverty

By Ian Cormack

On a damp Monday evening in November the Black Gull book shop in the High Road, N2, hosted a talk about economist and newspaper man Henry George, who shone light on the paradox of extreme poverty in mid-19th century America.

David Triggs, honorary president of the Henry George Foundation, described how George sought to understand how man could produce all of life's necessities for a fraction of the cost during past ages yet still could not eradicate poverty and destitution.

Land ownership

He watched the coming of the railways bring vast prosperity to the rail barons, as they knew which tracts of land to procure in advance. It dawned on him that, as exclusive occupation of a plot of land is only possible for one party, so the rest of the population who are excluded need to be compensated.

An invitation to speak at the University of California was withdrawn because his views had upset those with vested interests. Similarly in the UK at the time, MPs and voters too had to be landowners, so nothing got done and this situation largely continues today.



History master: David Triggs, Honorary President of The Henry George Foundation, speaking at Black Gull Books. Photo Mike Coles

Insights into social development

David read from George's book *Progress & Poverty* (1879) describing how a lone settler starts to make a living. Despite nature providing for many of his needs, he would

always be relatively poor and have to be a jack of all trades, until other people joined him. Then co-operation would allow the division of labour, thus leading to greater productivity but also to the emergence of rent.

George saw that, as society grew in this way, a diminishing proportion of the increased output went back into people's pockets because they had to pay rent. He saw how the failure to take natural resources as public revenue led to taxes being required on people and goods instead, causing poverty to those at the margin.

A lively and convivial discussion followed over refreshments provided by Brian Schwartz of Black Gull, and everyone left with much food for thought.

Agnes Wimborne: 1924-2019

Textile designer Agnes Wimborne, of Huntingdon Road, N2, died peacefully on 7 November in the Royal Free Hospital after a short illness. With a keen interest in art from early childhood, one could almost say that art ran in her blood.

She spent much of her childhood in and out of hospital due to two accidents where she broke the same leg. Her mother died when she was 11. At 17 she won a scholarship to the Central School of Arts and Crafts. During the Second World War, which interrupted her studies, she worked as a topographical draughtsman.

Agnes got married in 1943 and later spent a year in Jamaica, where her husband had found a teaching post. She was influenced by the light and tropical fauna, incorporating these elements into her subsequent designs and paintings.

Returning to England she resumed her studies at the Bath Academy of Art and then the Central School, where she gained a Diploma in Textile Design and then taught textiles and design.

ics and paintings. Her work can be found in the permanent collection of textiles in the



Designer Agnes Wimborne

Victorian and Albert Museum.

One of her African influenced designs was used to decorate the banquet hall in Claridge's Hotel. Other designs have been used in Brussels, Lisbon,



African influence: One of Agnes's designs

Her work was also influenced by African Art and its landscapes and wildlife, due to the many years she spent commuting between London and Ghana, where her husband also taught.

Throughout this period she continued to design and sell wallpapers and textiles. She also painted on silk, did batik and produced wonderful ceram-

She ran her own textile firm for many years and continued to design and produce innovative work and to remain faithful to her long held belief that design and art play an integral role in our lives. Her memory and spirit will live on through her work.

Agnes is survived by two loving sons, five grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

London, Paris, Lady Chaplin's House in Geneva, The Duke of Wellington's House Number 1 Piccadilly and in the British Embassy in Saudi Arabia.

RICKY SAVAGE ...

"The voice of social irresponsibility"

Fake music

We are living in interesting times, so interesting that it's like a rejected Carry On script, complete with madness, fools and a blond-buffoon Winston Churchill tribute act. And I blame the Australians. Not for the buffoon, but for the tribute acts.

Clive James said that Australia was the centre of the Koala Triangle, a place where culture either dies or leaves town. The ground zero of tribute acts, this is the place that gave you Bjorn Again and the Australian Pink Floyd Show and polluted rock'n'roll for ever.

It all comes down to Oz being the last place any self-respecting band wanted to visit. So if ABBA weren't going to come to Sydney, then a bunch of Aussies were going to fake it for a bit of a laugh. Since then we've had the mad, the bad and the deranged all over the world, musicians without the talent to write their own stuff doing replica acts like ReGenesis or The Bootleg Beatles.

Wonder what a bunch of three-chord punks would have made of *Waterloo*? Then check out Gabba and hear the Swedish foursome's greatest hits given the full Ramones treatment. Or what about Slady, Joanne Joanne and Lez Zeppelin, where you can watch girls doing the bloke rock thing.

Just about every band you've heard of has some half-baked tribute act out there, from AC/DC to Frank Zappa, and that's before we get to some civil servant from Stevenage doing his Elvis 'the fat and bloated Las Vegas years' act down the local pub.

Maybe they exist because the real thing has split up or they're mostly dead or past it or waiting for the Glastonbury Legend slot. Either way they fill the gap in their own weird way. Then again, some of the originals just keep going. Pete and Roger from The Who are touring this year and they've got a new album out, so who wants the fakes? And don't forget the perma-tanned one-time teen idol who was Britain's biggest star before the Beatles. Yes, folks, it's Cliff and he's doing his I'm-nearly-80 tour. So no need for a tribute act when you're doing it yourself!



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