

Arty things *Compiled by Anthea Beaumont*

Got a story, poem, report or announcement about any creative skill? Contact Anthea Beaumont, Tel. (01793) 762517 or e-mail: antheabeaumont@tiscali.co.uk

Highworth Festival gets under way

See page 8 for listing.

Friday 21st March – Highworth Passion

This month sees the start of Highworth Festival 2008 and a number of exciting events beginning with the Highworth Passion on Good Friday (see pages 21-24 in 'Link' for more details).

Wednesday 26th March – Breaking the Silence

Liz Rothschild, local producer and director of many community plays in the area, has written and performs her one person show about Rachel Carson called *Breaking the Silence*, at Southfields School at 7.30pm.



2007 was the centenary year of the birth of Rachel Carson, voted top international environmentalist last year by a panel of UK experts. She was the first person to make a convincing link between pesticides and their impact on the environment and animal and human health. She single-handedly took on the US Government and the agro-chemical industry in her groundbreaking book *Silent Spring*. She remains controversial and relevant today as debate rages about the use of DDT to prevent malaria and an action is taken against DEFRA in the High Court challenging their pesticide policy. There were many pieces in the UK media marking Rachel Carson's centenary.

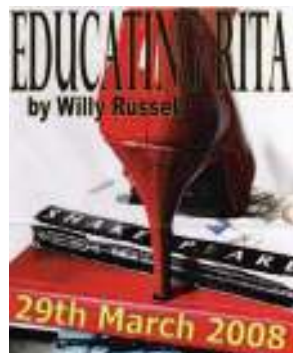
"The show is not a history lesson," Liz Rothschild says, "nor is it about fear and despair. It is a love story. Through it you meet this remarkable woman, experience the natural world as she did, and hear stories she never told in her lifetime, and how they reverberate today."

Tickets at £6 are available from the Lighthouse Bookshop or from Lyn Vardy, on (01793) 762521.

Mair Huband

Saturday 29th March – Educating Rita

This is closely followed by another performance at Southfields School, this time by sixth-formers from Dean Close School in Cheltenham. They will be presenting a much-acclaimed version of *Educating Rita*. The evening starts at 7.30pm. and tickets cost £5 – also available from the Lighthouse Bookshop or telephone 01793 762521.



Women in GWR

Following the success of her earlier book entitled *Trip – The Annual Holiday of GWR Swindon*, Highworth author and GWR historian Rosa Matheson has recently launched her latest book.

The Fair Sex – Women and the Great Western Railway follows the development of women, since the 1870's, into the male environment, where it was originally thought not to be suitable employment for women or 'the fair sex' as they were known in the GWR.



Initially women were employed as polishers and sewer, but due to the lack of men in the First and Second World War a window of opportunity was opened creating a range of clerical and other work for them. Using over 100 pictures, the book contains copies of many original

documents as well as written and oral testimony, providing first hand insight into the women's experiences. Many of the women and girls who worked for the GWR were ground breakers opening the way to railway careers for future generations of working women. The 'Fair Sex' is published by Tempus and is available at £12.99 in bookshops or by phoning (01793) 764979 for a signed copy.

Mair Huband