

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, October 14, 2013 **/24-7PressRelease/** -- Author, Anna Hutton-North, made a surprise discovery when she began researching her latest book 'Ferguson's Gang - The Maidens behind the Masks'. All the Gang members were highly educated girls who lived in grand country houses just like Downton Abbey.

These girls became famous for their masked appearances at the National Trust offices, dropping off a sack full of cash to buy an endangered historical property. They were responsible for helping to save vital architectural gems at a time when most were being destroyed to make way for twee bungalows.

Having been intrigued by the story of the anonymous members of Ferguson's Gang, Anna wanted to track down who these girls were. She started to become a historical detective using clues from the Gang's letters and minute book. However each gang member took a pseudonym (such as Bill Stickers, Red Biddy and Erb the Smasher) to ensure they kept their high-profile identities secret, making it even more difficult to trace them.

"It was fascinating finding out more about the Gang," said Anna. "They were born into real life Downton Abbey homes yet they became quite radical for their time. They wore elaborate disguises, delivered money wrapped around cigars or in the carcase of a goose and dedicated their lives to thwarting the house builders and developers of the time."

As Anna discovered the true identities of the gang members there were some exciting findings. The leader of the gang was Gladstone's great-niece, one of the Gang members was a friend of Thomas Hardy and another was related to Rudyard Kipling. However what was most interesting was the fact that the five inner-circle members were all society women who had grown up in grand country houses and mixed with the Royal family and literary elite.

"The fact these society darlings took a stance against builders who were destroying the English countryside with estates of bungalows made the work seem even more rewarding. They raised huge amounts of money in order to preserve the architectural gems that they had known in their childhood," Anna said. "This group of people defied society to make a difference. The book was, in a way, a tribute to their dedication in saving England for our generation to enjoy."

The fascinating story of how Ferguson's Gang defied society and helped to save England's historical heritage is available in the book 'Ferguson's Gang - The Maidens behind the Masks'. Here the five girls in the Gang are finally revealed as are their local high profile supporters.

Anna Hutton-North lives in Hertfordshire and is a recognised authority on Ferguson's Gang; she regularly gives lectures and talks about the Gang. She has written extensively for newspapers, trade journals and magazines and is the winner of the Stirling Cup for short stories. Her books include Shop Talk, Rural Affairs, Tallulah the Terrible and her latest historical book is Ferguson's Gang - The Maidens behind the Masks.

Ferguson's Gang - The Maidens behind the masks: ISBN 978-1-291-48453-3

More information on Ferguson's Gang - <http://www.fergusonsgang.co.uk>

To place orders for the book contact your local bookshop or visit Amazon.co.uk. For a review copy of the book email: info@fergusonsgang.co.uk URL: <http://www.fergusonsgang.co.uk>

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For a high-resolution JPEG colour photograph of Anna Hutton-North or the book cover, please email info@fergusonsgang.co.uk