



Lies to tell tourists

The Queen now tweets enthusiastically at @hrhlizziew. Her first monarchic missive was: 'Hello citizen tweeps, one's running late for #royalwedding because @freshprincephil mislaid cufflinks again - #morninghorribilus'

The Twitterati have also been lying to London tourists. For our pick of the best tweeted fibs, see www.timeout.com/lies.



London in your lunch hour!



Spirit guides Rajasthanian masks protect the Treadwells tomes



THIS WEEKEND'S TUBE CLOSURES

Circle Line

No Saturday service
Hammersmith-Edgware Rd.
No Sunday service
Hammersmith-Aldgate.

District Line

No service Barking-Tower Hill
or Tower Hill-Upney.

Hammersmith & City Line

No Saturday service Liverpool
St-Barking.
No Sunday service
Hammersmith-Edgware Rd.

Jubilee Line

No Sunday service Stanmore-
Willesden Green

Metropolitan Line

No Saturday service
Moorgate-Aldgate.
No Sunday service Harrow-on-
the-Hill-Aldgate.

Victoria Line

No service.

For updates call 0843 222 1234
or see www.tfl.gov.uk.

Spirit yourself away to a numinous literary space, where even sceptics can find inner peace...

Before you step into Treadwells on Store Street in Bloomsbury, be sure to leave your cynical self behind, because here you will encounter every esoteric and alternative way to engage with the physical, non-physical and spiritual worlds.

Inside is an atmosphere rich and hushed, with dark wooden floors, Persian carpets and the scent of burning incense. On brimming bookshelves sit the wooden masks of horned spirits brought from the Rajasthan desert to offer protection.

This unusual space belongs to the half-English, half-American Christina Oakley Harrington, who opened Treadwells in Covent Garden in 2003, but relocated it in February this year. It is her mission to introduce the layman to the beauty and power of all that is magical and pagan, and to offer those already converted a community hub to learn and share their experiences.

'Treadwells is dedicated to culture around the world,' she explains. 'We offer the unexpected. We love it if people

can enter here in a spirit of exploration. We also have a legendary "browser's sofa" for lounging and reading. If you stay longer than two hours, we will give you cups of tea.'

From her frequent trips abroad, Harrington brings back not just books but also objects used in rituals, ceremonies and witchcraft. You will find an area dedicated to crystal balls, Ouija boards, tarot, pebble runes, magic wands, potions to cast spells, Wicca daggers and silver jewellery incorporating ancient Egyptian motifs, such as the eye of Horus and the ankh.

The main focus, however, is on the books, which are clustered together in their genres of history, geography, religion and practice. They span nineteenth-century China, ancient Sumeria, voodoo Haiti, *fin-de-siècle* Paris and medieval romance, and there's a section on sexuality and Jungian psychology. Some volumes are costly collectors' pieces; others reasonably priced and secondhand.

Harrington proudly showed me the shop's two most treasured books. The first was a signed copy from 1949 of Gerald Gardner's 'High Magic's Aid', on goddess

worship, initiation rites and magical spells; the second was the nineteenth-century Chinese 'Book of Flower Fairy Festival' with its hand-coloured plates.

Still curious, I scanned Treadwells' noticeboard, where the capital's community of pagan goddesses, priestesses, white witches and druids exchange news and post events taking place around London. After hours, Harrington hosts talks, workshops and quiz nights in the shop's basement. The front door shuts at exactly 7pm; thereafter, only those invited or who have reserved places may be privy to these enchanting happenings. On certain days, ceremonies take place to celebrate pagan events.

I was also intrigued by the guided tours on offer, such as the 'Witches, Wizards and Warlocks Tour of London', led by white witch Delianne Forget. I must confess I booked a tarot reading with house diviner Diana Taylor, so I will be returning soon to the shop. Despite the spiritual ambience of Treadwells, I'm yet to be converted. Maybe a few cups of tea will do it... **Nahla Al-Ageli** Treadwells bookshop, 33 Store St, WC1E 7BS (7240 8906/ www.treadwells-london.com). Noon-7pm daily.

Tell us about perfect lunchtime escapes near your workplace! Email lunchhour@timeout.com.

