Reynoldston Reading Group

Our thanks to Jane Gibson for hosting the latest meeting of the group and to

Heather Laurie for leading the discussion and presenting a comprehensive

synopsis of the novel “Enigma “ by Robert Harris. The novel marries non-

fiction with fiction and the subject is the breaking of the U-boat signalling

code. . The story is a snapshot in terms of time-frame; although

its course runs only a few months in the winter

of 1943, the book absorbs 450 pages of clear description. It is in this period

that the main character, Tom Jerico, successfully breaks the “impregnable “

Enigme code when he experiences a stroke of genius. One winter doesn’t

give much scope for character development but the players are sharply drawn

as are the scenes and atmosphere of the country in those uncomfortable war

years in the early 1940s.The author’s note

states that all the German signals quoted are authentic , and the background is

an actual historical event. The author weaves into the story a bit of romance,

some excitement and gets the readers emotionally involved with some of the

characters. However the story is a snapshot in terms of time-frame ; it runs its

course only over a few months in the winter of 1943 and one winter does not

allow time for character development.