



Post-Lib

No. 66 | December 2012



Inside

Our contributors consider:

- Ivan Illich and Libraries
- Worm farmers and blue pottery
- Zombies and project management



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Professionals

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Contributions intended to appear in the next issue of *Post-Lib* should be sent to the editor by **Monday February 25**. Authors are encouraged to submit material via email to the following address: **r.usherwood@sheffield.ac.uk** If this is not possible, items may be sent as a typed manuscript, which should be double-spaced, and on single sides. Hard copy should be sent to Bob Usherwood at, **324 Loughborough Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 7FD**

The editor is always happy to discuss ideas with potential contributors and can be telephoned at any reasonable time on **0115 923 4050**

The cover illustrations show pictures from library calendars taken at home and abroad. **Top left:** The secret garden at Bromley House Library in Nottingham. **Bottom left:** American "calendar boys" represent the interests of male librarians in "Men of the stacks." **Top right:** The South Australian Library and Information Network (SALIN) does something different by featuring zombies in the library. **Bottom right:** The Vermont Library Association's 2012 wall calendar .

Our seasonal feature beginning on page 5 looks at different calendars produced by library organizations around the world.

Photo Credits and other details are included at the end of the article.



TERMS OF TRADE

Bob Usherwood



We delayed the preparation of this editorial in order to wait for the publication of the House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport Committee's (2012) report on *Library Closures*. Ironically, an emailed but embargoed copy of this dampest of squibs of a document arrived on November 5th. By now readers will be aware of its main recommendations and there is little we would wish to add to the excellent response pasted on Public Libraries News (<http://www.publiclibrariesnews.com/2012/11/damp-squib-the-inquiry-into-library-closures-releases-its-report.html>). This used one sentence to sum up the committee's underwhelming conclusions. It said. "people are told to work harder, share good practice and not to close libraries wholesale without a decent plan." DCMS may or may not produce a decent plan sometime in the future but first we have to wait until the end of 2014 to give the Minister time to survey the damage caused by his government's cuts and "enthusiasm ...for volunteer involvement". Your editor did try and save him time by supplying the committee with summaries of some Sheffield research, including that providing detailed evidence on the impact of library closures (see Proctor et al 1996, 1998). However, as he told us in June, the Minister wants to concentrate on "continuing to spread the good news" (http://www.culture.gov.uk/news/ministers_speeches/9167.aspx)

No doubt DCMS will use *Update* as a possible conduit for this "good news", a publication the closures report describes as "the trade journal" of CILIP. Some of us considering the plethora of re hashed press releases found in it from time to time may have sympathy with this but it was a worrying use of language none-the-less. Your editor may not have noticed it had his inbox not reported, at about the same time, that a large library authority was "researching a specialised post of 'Customer Service Supervisor' which would be purely shop floor/frontline based and would lead, manage and develop staff in this capacity". Readers may think this reflects a strange sense of priorities at a time when, in many places users find it difficult to locate a professionally qualified librarian.

Of course all of this, especially the language ("trade", "customer", "shop"), reflects a commercial model of librarianship that has been peddled and sadly adopted, sometimes with enthusiasm, around the library world. At some point the profession needs to decide if it wants to maintain public libraries as social institutions serving the public good or as quasi retail outlets that simply seek to maximise their popularity by responding to populist demands. As this is being written an email alert states, "Stellar Libraries latest salacious campaign 'Between the Sheets' will be launching in just one week"! Libraries are not simply a part of the retail trade but complex public services that have to balance the needs of the individual with those of society as a whole.

A couple of decades ago the playwright David Edgar(1991), in a splendid piece that is still available

on-line ,dismantled the idea that we should all be customers. He said:" What's wrong with it is what's wrong with the market as the sole or even principal medium for our public dealings. It individualises us, it divides us and it ultimately dehumanises our relationships in the public world." Unfortunately far too many librarians have embraced commercialism, markets, customers, et al. Googling "library customers" produced "About 105,000 results (0.26 seconds)". At the same time, consultants and private companies have taken advantage of the local authority cuts to offer, at a price that produces a profit, a variety of products ranging from courses on volunteers, customer focus, etcetera to packages for running individual libraries or indeed services as a whole.

These companies have no real interest in providing free and equal access to information and works of imagination and even less in the ethical and intellectual values of public service. It has to be said that a number within the profession have also shown little concern for such values. Some have even gone so far as to oppose them; joining the likes of the Murdoch press by describing them as "elitist". In part, this is why we have witnessed the increasing deprofessionalisation of the public library service. The implications of this are serious at a time when, as recent events show, social and technological change raise ethical and other questions that require professional judgement and sometimes reference to a professional code of conduct.

At the same time, volunteers and well meaning citizens are being encouraged to run library services. The age of austerity and weasel words about the big society have now added amateurisation to what is already a lethal mix. What is the future for a library service rooted in amateurisation, deprofessionalisation and privatisation? Who will have the skills to navigate citizens through the jungle of misinformation that is the internet and the tabloid press? Who will be able to introduce children to, and encourage them to sample, the great works of imagination that will enrich their lives? How will we ensure that the standards of the "comprehensive and efficient" service are universal and that what people receive does not depend on their wallet or post code? The library profession and the public it serves can not afford to wait for two years to find out.

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STAY CALM AND CARRY ON QUIETLY? I THINK NOT!

< Frances Hendrix

I was born in a small Welsh mining village, deep in the Valleys. Employment was either in the pit, or at the steelworks farther up the valley in Ebbw Vale. Looking back it was a life that had been stable for a hundred years or more, but was moving inevitably towards what it is today, no mining, no steelworks, and no employment. However as with most children the grime, poverty and grindingly hard work passed me by. As far as I was concerned life was idyllic. I was loved by my parents, idolised by my grandparents and had the

heart of the village, and apart from promoting socialist ideals, with a shelf or two of radical tomes, it was a place of relaxation and entertainment with a billiards hall, a large dance hall, socialist rallies (the Conservative Club had better beer so there was a certain flexibility of allegiance), Town band practice (I played Trumpet - a sign of things to come), and during my early teens I used it to run events for young people that I had set up – hugely successful until the mother of the treasurer ran off with the cash!

networking was by that now strange concept of meeting actual people 'live' at the Church, Chapel, WI or of course, the Stute. But by my teens things had begun to change, with better transport, a second TV channel and more opportunity to go to the cinema, but throughout this the public libraries held their own. They grew, improved and at that time never ever seemed to be under threat.

As we all know, over the years they have extended their role to offer specialist services, such as Children's events, Special collections, Video, Music, etc. etc., and in some cases re-invent themselves as Discovery Centres.

Never whilst I was growing up was there any hint of negativity, government intervention, cuts or closures, in fact nothing I believe, until the creation of the DCMS!

So where are we now? We have a plethora of groups for librarians interested in pretty much everything. The University sector, Special libraries, and of course Public libraries. CILIP, better known to us oldies as the LA, has changed, slimmed and become, well I am not really quite sure what it has become. It is supposedly for all librarians and libraries, but its reach, effect and influence seems to have waned.

The SCL, that much maligned body of Chiefs (or rather Business managers), seems quite uncertain of its role and doesn't feel it can put its head above the parapet.



Anyway are they still relevant? We now have the People's Library. With the on-going practice of cutting public library budgets, closing libraries, using volunteers, the public have gone to the barriers to protect public libraries. There have been sit-ins, judicial enquiries,

“ ...when each week a box of books would arrive from the nearest town there was a queue and eagerness that would rival any Harrods sale to get first choice. ”

freedom to roam, something which children nowadays can only dream of. Transport to get out was restricted to an infrequent and diminishing train service, finally killed off by Beeching, the odd bus often cancelled in deep winter snows, and the even rarer car which struggled up the steep narrow roads with less power than a pit pony. As with many small villages, life was fairly restricted to what the village itself could provide; extended families, the Chapels and Church, the radio, a sing-song around the piano, a game of cards or reading.

The Welsh education system then was strong, but many parents saw that for their children the way out of being trapped in the same cycle was through knowledge.

Our small village had 'the Stute'. This was the local Workingmen's Institute, built originally with funds accrued by a small sum taken from miners' wages, and perhaps supplemented by contributions from the steelworks or mine owners. The Stute was at the

What we didn't have was a library, but there was a demand for knowledge, romance and fiction so great that when each week a box of books would arrive from the nearest town there was a queue and eagerness that would rival any Harrods sale to get first choice.

This situation stayed the same for most of my childhood then the nearest town opened a converted chapel as a library. It was magnificent, one large room and an upper balcony, crammed full of books arranged into sections. Jones the bus carried borrowers every weekday with overspill on a Saturday. My first job was as a Saturday girl in this branch library, prior to leaving the grime and smog of our village for the grime and smog of Birmingham to study Librarianship.

Of course in those days people did not have mobile phones, TV, with its associated 20' pole aerial to peer over the mountains, arrived just in time for the Queen's coronation though so few had a set there were 15 people peering through the windows, and 30 crammed in the sitting rooms. Social



stand offs, and litigation by all and sundry across the country. More and more authors and celebrities have supported the cause, but somewhere in Cockspur street (Oh I do love that name), there are civil servants and the infamous Ed Vaizey (and co.), making the odd vacuous statement.

It occurred to me some years ago that what DMCS wanted was a strong department, and public libraries were a fly in the ointment. This fly has continued to grow and breed and has become more and more of an irritant, moving towards an infestation. The government talks about the Big Society, but it must irk that public libraries are becoming one of the best examples of the Big Society demanding its right to have access to a wide range of information materials and to sit within a public library environment where there is knowledgeable help and assistance to hand.

However, sad to say, the DCMS have been aided and abetted by our professional colleagues. The world of the public authorities appears to be a sort of gulag where one must be very careful not to air ones views or be damned for ever and sent to the very outer reaches of the county. To defend your libraries, the SCL have made mild murmurs, CILIP appears lame and insecure, but behold the flurry of splinter groups, library protesters, and community groups who are the guerrillas of the protection against cruelty to libraries and librarians. People from all sorts of places, ages, skills and talents have come forth to save what they want in their big society, and what they believe in. Perhaps we'd still be safer if we were badgers!

When I was Director of LASER we held a competition on interlending for National Libraries' week in conjunction with the BL at Boston Spa. The idea was that when people left their library with their books tucked under their arm that they had a slip popped in to complete and return on the next visit which indicated if they had used the interlibrary loan service, what they had requested, and from where it had been supplied.

The results were quite astonishing. Books from as far away as New Zealand on Maori Art, a North Wales farmer who collected blue china, whose life would



*The public are showing support for libraries.
Photo: Eastern Daily Press (EDP Beccles)*

be desolate in the winter if he could not get his interlibrary loans from the mobile library, and surprising numbers of grandmothers and grandfathers researching the illnesses of their grandchildren. In the end the winners were an unemployed couple who had received books from the United States on worm farming. They used a small branch library in Hereford, and from the pamphlets and books they had obtained started, and then ran, a profitable new business venture.

The editor of this magazine did some excellent research many years ago in Somerset and Newcastle City, to demonstrate the added value that libraries made. In Somerset to the elderly, and in Newcastle to the immigrant female members of the community. It showed the huge range of care, activities and services public libraries, of all sizes, offered to these groups, and just how valued they were. (Linley & Usherwood 1998)

So where are we today and who is it that is pursuing the public library agenda?

There are a number of people, most NOT librarians, who work hard to ensure that the daily reports about libraries are widely distributed to politicians, journalists, campaigners and librarians to keep them informed about what is really happening around the country. This work ensures that everyone is informed and do not have to rely upon the spin put out by officials. Does not the Minister still say that there is no crisis and keeps quoting the SCL that 40 newly refurbished or new build libraries will open this year, while ignoring the devastation in the hinterland. The SCL excuses itself by saying that they

are involved in "quiet diplomacy" - some would suggest that their efforts to promote the importance of libraries and librarians are so quiet as to be almost silent!

The agenda is largely driven by passionate, hardworking (and unpaid) campaigners ranging from Kirklees and Doncaster to Gloucestershire, Somerset and the Isle of Wight to Brent and Lewisham. They are brilliantly supported by many authors such as Philip Pullman, Julia Donaldson, Michael Rosen and Michael Morpurgo, backed by the

excellent work of the Society of Authors. A number of professional librarians including Biddy Fisher (past CILIP President), Lauren Smith (former CILIP Vice President) and Johanna Anderson (Gloucestershire) have led very successful local campaigns; in some cases including Judicial Reviews. They are all committed to ensuring that an "improving, comprehensive and efficient" library service is provided in every authority.

In general, Councils have been dissuaded by the public outcry from closing libraries but are now bent on pushing them on to volunteer groups, making paid librarians redundant. The implication is that anybody can "play" at being a librarian and some volunteer groups even seem to be drawing more people into their volunteer run library, though other such libraries are struggling to survive.

The real issue facing the profession is whether the professional bodies, SCL and CILIP are actually trying to get across the message that librarians provide real value and undertake critical work to support literacy, education, the acquisition of knowledge and in helping everyone bridge the "digital divide". Perhaps as a profession we need to challenge our professional bodies to do a lot more and a much better job at standing up for librarians and library assistants. You don't change national and local government policies by "quiet diplomacy" or by having very infrequent meetings with a junior minister! The BMA and nursing professional bodies will tell you that, as will parliamentarians. And let's stop thinking that because librarians are lovely and highly committed people that MPs think the leadership of our professional



bodies are effective advocates. They are obviously not!

The reality is that campaigners, many authors and some other trade bodies and several journalists think we should and must do more to promote the value of libraries and librarians. One librarian wrote anonymously recently about "bloody library campaigners". Well we should be grateful for the superb work of these bloody campaigners across the country fighting for their community libraries, fund raising to support Judicial Reviews and raising the issues in the public arena.

50 years ago a Chief Librarian was a person of standing and reputation, someone respected in the community to inspire and run their library effectively and efficiently. Dropping the need for membership of a professional body or professional qualification started the rot, and allowed politicians and councillors to see that if the profession hadn't fought to retain the respect and status of its members, then why should they.

These same professional bodies now need to join forces with the campaigners, authors and the media to demand a vibrant, improving and effective service for all, whatever their post code. Would any other profession sit around waiting for "quiet diplomacy" to deliver a comprehensive and efficient service to all who need and rely upon it?

In the meantime those gallant few try to keep everyone informed about what is going on in every authority, in the media and at Westminster. May I suggest that anyone not on any list providing daily updates should regularly read Public Libraries News? The Minister, Ed Vaizey even recommended to the Chairman of the Culture Select Committee that he should get onto Desmond Clarke's list. Ed Vaizey, Dan Jarvis and the Chair of the All Party Library Group receive information from this list so perhaps CILIP and the SCL should ensure that such information is also passed to all their members, not just when CILIP gets a mention in a press article!

Desmond Clarke is the key person for liaising with the powers in the land and has extensive contacts in the media. Shirley Burnham circulates items of national news to campaigners on a daily basis; also using the medium of Twitter to make sure everyone is kept up to date. But how the picture has changed in the last year or so. The whole country has come on board!

It should be noted that CILIP has this year finally bowed to pressure from its members to reject the notion of volunteers 'replacing' paid library staff; something to be recognised and encouraged. The SCL has done no such thing - a dismaying fact that should be condemned.

Some of the major campaigners include the following:-

- Johanna Anderson, Friends of Gloucestershire Libraries. Tireless.
- Surrey Libraries Action Group
- Friends of Doncaster Libraries
- Voices For The Library
- Alan Gibbons and his 'Campaign For the Book'
- Ian Anstice and his much-relied-upon Website – Public Libraries News. A unique, accurate source used by the media and others, alike.
- Dave Quigley – tirelessly pursuing every avenue to get justice for Isle of Wight library users
- Geoffrey Dron – fighting to save Bolton libraries
- Lewisham Library campaigners, in particular Mr and Mrs Richardson
- Save Upper Norwood Library campaign group
- Save Friern Barnet Library (now occupied by "squatters")
- Elizabeth Crozier and Croydon Campaigners
- The people of Kirklees who are fighting hard, as I write

and many, many more – too numerous to mention.

What is so wonderful about this is the support the public are showing for their libraries. Would not any business be delighted to see how much the service they offer is appreciated and fought for?

When I was young the weekly delivery of that regular box of books was greatly valued. Now that I am a 'Senior', it seems that the opportunities we had from the growth of the public library as a universal service available to anyone anywhere, has gone. Yes, technology is vital and it assists and improves many library services and activities. But 'the place', 'the time' to find sanctuary and quiet in a public library is being taken away from many of the population. The opportunity to introduce children to the joys of reading, for the young student to find a haven for studying, the civilisation of having free access to the wonders of

the world, is going, going, almost gone?

Of course there are library reviews and reviews and more reviews, how many I have lost count. In 2003, whilst I was still at the LASER Foundation, we commissioned Charlie Leadbeater to undertake a review entitled 'Overdue'. It is still the best in-depth look at the sector. He finished by stating that "Unless decisive action is taken now, the decline of our Public libraries could become terminal by the end of the decade. If that happened Britain could be writing off vital social and cultural assets. Public libraries used to be central to the life of many communities but they are increasingly marginalised". The report recommended a 10 year strategy for transforming libraries. Well the 10 years is now almost up, opportunities have been lost, all-encompassing government support has gone out of the window and with it one of the mainstays of a democratic and civilised society.

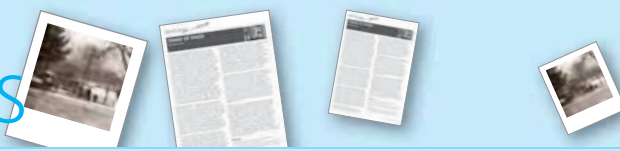
But we cannot, and must not, stop the push. We must have the organisations and societies that listen to the public, and the politicians who take these comments from a wide range of the public to heart. I bet if the future of public libraries was put to the vote, there would be more votes in support of keeping libraries than for the institution of Police and Crime Commissioner in each of the 42 areas! Unfortunately as Lord Matthew Evans once said to me over lunch, 'Frances, the problem for public libraries is that they have no shroud factor'.

Local authorities have continued to make cuts based on that premise, but I think that the entrepreneurial worm farmers and the collector of blue pottery would wish otherwise.

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Frances Hendrix was Chief Executive, LASER 1989 – 2001 and Chief Executive & Company Secretary, LASER Foundation 2001 – 2009. She is currently a Board member, Lancashire Police Authority, National Course Director for Judicial Studies Board and Trustee of Home-Safe Wyre.



FROM NAKED LIBRARIANS TO CHILDREN'S ART – A LOOK AT LIBRARY CALENDARS



As we started to collect material from around the world for a seasonal item on library calendars a local theatre critic wrote, "a reliable source – tells us that *Calendar Girls* is 'the fastest selling play in British theatre history', which might make you weep for the state of the nation." He went on to argue "It's exploitative and nauseating ... with a selection of crude stereotypes instead of people". (Geary 2012). These were not the ideas we had in mind and we nearly decided to do something else. However, on hearing from colleagues associated with the production of "library calendars", it became clear that many told fascinating stories reflecting the history or natural features of local communities while a large number were produced to help good causes of various kinds. These include several that portrayed anything but library stereotypes.

It is now over twelve years since the production of the 'nude' calendar featuring members of a Women's Institute that inspired the 2003 film and the play so disliked by the critic quoted above. The publication was sold to raise money for Leukaemia & Lymphoma Research, and such was its success that various fundraising groups are still seeking to replicate the idea. Women library staff in Camden were among the first to repeat the exercise when, in 2003 according to the local paper, they "removed their dust-jackets to renew interest in the printed word by producing a 'nude calendar'" (Osley 2003). Diane Bowman who organised the project admitted. "Some people have said that it is a little tacky," ... They say it is a little demeaning to the profession. But we think it is tasteful. We think it shows that librarians have lives outside of libraries and shows that we are not all dull and boring people "

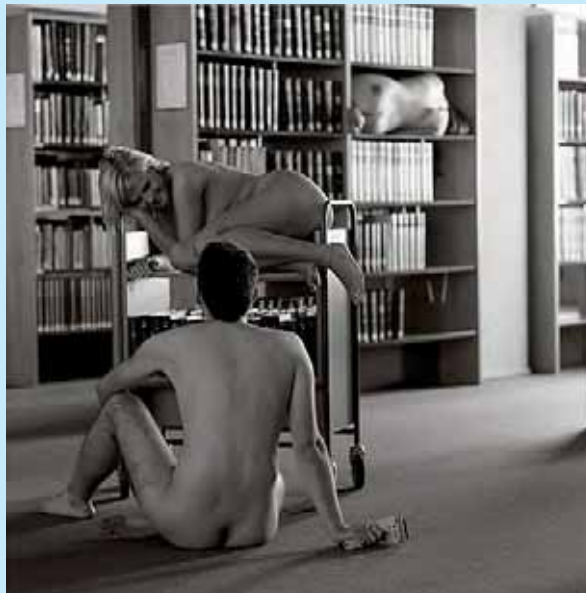
Something similar was behind a calendar featuring "The tattooed ladies of the Texas Library Association". This was sold to raise disaster relief money to help damaged libraries and also to get people interested in library issues. It was a follow-up to a "Men of Texas Libraries" calendar, which raised \$9,000 to help libraries damaged by hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Later, presumably unaware of this, some male librarians in the USA hearing about the tattooed ladies and admiring their efforts asked, "...what about us? Where are all the men?" They felt the calendar reinforced the stereotype of librarians as people who wear glasses and are exclusively female and decided to produce a calendar

to represent the professional and the personal interests of male librarians. The result was the 2012 Calendar *Men of the Stacks*. Its production was not without problems, one model was threatened with legal action for appearing in it and the trustees of the fund selected to receive the proceeds (ironically a library fund supporting intellectual freedom) said they would not adopt or endorse the project. In the end the librarians decided to support the charity "It gets better". This supports GLBT young people and demonstrates that, in spite of bullying et al, things will get better in their future. Megan Perez, who co-ordinated the project said it had "two goals: to help alter the perception of professional librarians and do some good for the world..." There is no doubt that by rising over \$18,000 it did a great deal of good but CILIP President, Phil Bradley (2011) was unsure if it helped change the perception of librarians. In his blog he commented:

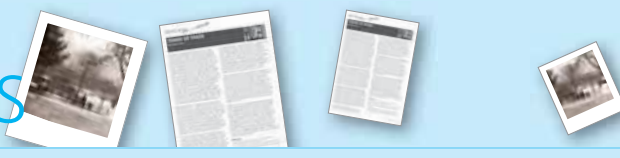
Does it tell us anything about what librarians actually DO? About the importance of libraries? Is it going to increase visits to libraries other than to those containing hunky librarians pictured? I really rather doubt it. I don't think it is, and as such, I think it's failing in its key aim. On the other hand, maybe it IS just a bit of fun and I'm way over-analysing it? I'm really in two minds..."

In another effort to popularize books, libraries and learning the non-profit organization "Guerilla Readers" whose primary aim is to promote reading. produced a 2010, calendar called "The library is sexy". This featured nude pictures of Masaryk University "library studies" undergraduates, taken in the Moravian Library at Brno in the Czech Republic. It became an instant hit and sold out quickly. Guerilla Readers got good press coverage and its website declared an intention to "start a tradition and become the Pirelli of libraries," In addition to providing the location for the photo-shoot the Moravian Library also held an exhibition of photographs from the calendar.

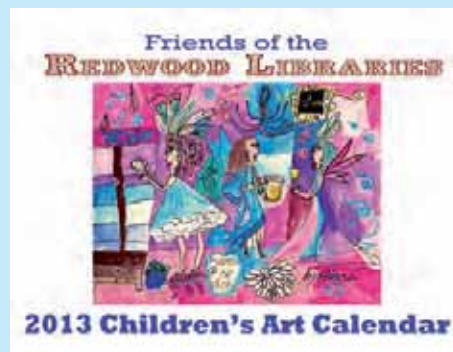
Seeking to portray librarians as professionals who make a positive impact on communities and beyond, while at the same time raising funds for a good cause, the University of Toronto chapter of Librarians Without Borders (LWB) led by iSchool students, created a 2012 calendar featuring students and faculty members. Many of the models posed against



Library studies students at Brno in the Czech Republic suggest "The library is sexy"



Librarians without borders poke fun at stereotypes



One of five different covers for a calendar featuring artwork of local children



Celebrating "the centennial of the 'Bread and Roses' strike"

"library" icons such as a card catalogue or a stack of books. Some of the pictures also poke fun at stereotypes along the way, such as a tight pencil skirt and thick-rimmed glasses-wearing librarian. The team sought to raise \$5,000 for LWB to donate to various projects. These included contributing books to a school library in Guatemala, and helping 'Libraries Across Africa' deliver digital and customizable book-based services in Ghana.

In 2001, another group of LIS graduates established the South Australian Library and Information Network (SALIN). It was set up to serve the professional development and networking needs of new and not-so-new library and information workers. A decade after its foundation it celebrated "our diverse and changing profession through production of the 2011 calendar *Zombies in the Library*. ... the calendar covers such topics as the role of the Zombie in reference, the frustrations faced when the Undead hog the photocopier, and for cataloguers, poses the eternal question: 299.675 or 398.21?" (http://www.salin.org.au/?page_id=76) The calendar uses the same images from year to year. Purchasers can specify the starting month when they place an order (for example, they could request it to cover July 2013-June 2014). Benjamin Wheal, whose idea the calendar was, says that the idea behind the calendar was "to do something different and creative; too many professional development options are too bland (seminars on metadata etc.). It was good to do something that got people really excited. The calendar committee learnt some project management, promotion, negotiation skills and had fun too." He also recommended the following link, which shows the group's TV appearance earlier this year promoting the calendar and libraries: (<http://au.tv.yahoo.com/sunrise/video/-/watch/29610538/>)

Funding the library

Other groups use calendars to raise funds for the library and to mark various aspect of their local community. 2013 will see

the fourth edition of the Sawtooth Calendar, which features photos of the local scenery and is sold to raise money to build a brand new Stanley Community Library. Pictures are donated by both professional and amateur photographers. There is a small advertisement on each month which pays for the cost of printing the calendar which is sold through local retail outlets. Construction started on the new library in June, this year and is expected to be completed soon.

Closer to home, the Northamptonshire Libraries 2013 Calendar is on sale at all libraries in the county. It too features local scenes and enables purchasers "to enjoy the beauty of our magic county throughout 2013." The pictures featured in the calendar are the winners of a Photographic Competition entitled 'Capturing Northamptonshire'. The entries were judged by Friends of the Library Groups across the county it is hoped to make this competition an annual event. Very close to your editor's home, Bromley House a private library located

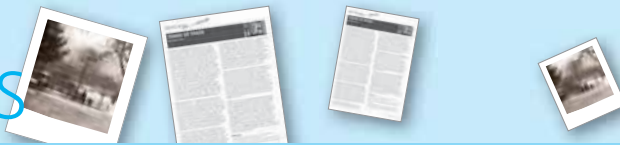
“ Hopefully our members will buy the calendar as presents for friends who will then be interested in Bromley House Library. ”

in the centre of Nottingham has produced a 2013 calendar which features pictures of the library and its "hidden garden" The Librarian at Bromley House , Carol Barstow , told us , "Our reason is primarily fundraising but also with a little bit of a thought of marketing too. Hopefully our members will buy the calendar as presents for friends who will then be interested in Bromley House Library. "

The Vermont Library Association's 2012 wall calendar is also about libraries. It features one Vermont library per county for a total of fourteen months. "Each month provides a window into the history and personality of each library with great pictures, interesting stories and bits of statistics." The profits from the sales stay with the libraries to support their services.

The Friends of the Redwood Libraries in Eureka, California believe that "even in a down economy ... some things are too important to let fall by the wayside. We believe the Humboldt County Library System is one of those things." For 2013 they are publishing a fund raising calendar featuring the artwork of local children. The theme is "My Favorite Book" which repeats that of the 2012 calendar. In addition to selling the calendars





money is raised through sponsorships which range from "up to \$100 to \$500 or more. Sponsors are acknowledged in the Calendar and on the Friends website. In addition to fund raising which brings in "a little over \$1000 per edition" the publication is, says Friends member Ray King "a way for Redwood Libraries and Friends groups to integrate with the communities, introduce ourselves, and encourage new members into the Libraries."

It seems that even the Vatican Library is in need of funds and in 2011 World Library Publications produced a Treasures of the Vatican Library 2012 Calendar. Proceeds from its sale help support vocations and the ongoing work of historic preservation and restoration of the Vatican Apostolic Library. The calendar presents selected illuminated manuscripts from the collection at the Vatican Apostolic Library, together with photos and quotations of Pope Benedict XVI.

Local History

Calendars produced by the Friends of Lawrence Public Library in Massachusetts feature pictures taken from the Library's Local History Collection. In 2011 the topic was sporting highlights and contained illustrations demonstrating the athletic traditions that are part the city's history. This year, the Director told *Post-Lib.*, the calendar "celebrated the centennial of the 'Bread and Roses' textile strike of 1912. "This strike" she said, "was very significant in our country's labour history". Early in 1912, mill owners at the American Wool Company in Lawrence respond to a new law reducing the number of hours that women could work by cutting the pay of their women mill workers. At first, some Polish women workers went on strike when they learned about the cut in pay; a few other women at other mills in Lawrence also joined in but within days ten thousand textile workers were on strike, most of them women. The city of Lawrence rang riot bells as an alarm. Eventually, 25,000. went on strike.

Following a meeting of strikers a member of the IWW (Industrial Workers of the World) was invited to Lawrence to organize the workers and help with the strike which was to become



The National Library of Scotland uses on its front cover an image named 'Going to school', from R.R. Mclan and James Logan, Picturesque Gatherings of the Scottish Highlanders..., London, 1848

Northamptonshire's calendar pictures "the beauty of our magic county"



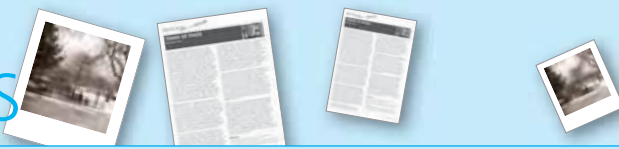
Libraries NI uses a seasonal scene from images held by Derry Central Library

increasingly violent. A woman striker, was killed as the police broke up a picket line, and when the authorities involved the militia there were reports of mothers and children being beaten and children taken from their parents. The vicious attacks on the strikers led to an investigation by U.S. Congress, with strikers being called to give evidence. The President's wife took an interest and fearing government restrictions the mill companies started to meet the striker's demands

The strike is known as the "Bread and Roses" strike because signs carried by the women are said to have read "We Want Bread, But Roses Too!" The words refer to a poem written the year before by James Oppenheim to celebrate women's rights. It became a rallying cry for the strike and subsequently taken up by the labour movement. Mimi Fariña set it to music and some, like the editor, may recall a Judy Collins recording of the mid seventies. (If anyone has a copy they would like to sell please get in touch)

For 2013 Lawrence Public Library is recalling Salisbury Beach Memories. This is known as the "Lawrence Riviera" because many city residents spent time and took their holidays there. The calendar contains photographs from the 1920s to the present day together with postcards holidaymakers sent to their family and friends in Lawrence. The library archivist, Louise Sandberg told the local paper the Friends of the Lawrence Public Library started working on the calendar in July. They asked for photographs via the library's website and were also helped by the Salisbury Historical Society. She said "People get very nostalgic about the beach ... Salisbury Beach was a big thing in the Merrimack Valley because it was one of the only place that was accessible to most people." (in Betances 2012)

Friends of the Lawrence Public Library have been producing a historic calendar since 1991 using material from The Special Collections of the Lawrence Public Library. In its first year is The Libraries NI 2013 Heritage Calendar. The calendar which anticipates Derry-Londonderry City of Culture 2013 has been created using images from the Bigger and McDonald archive held in Derry Central Library. These first appeared in the Derry Standard

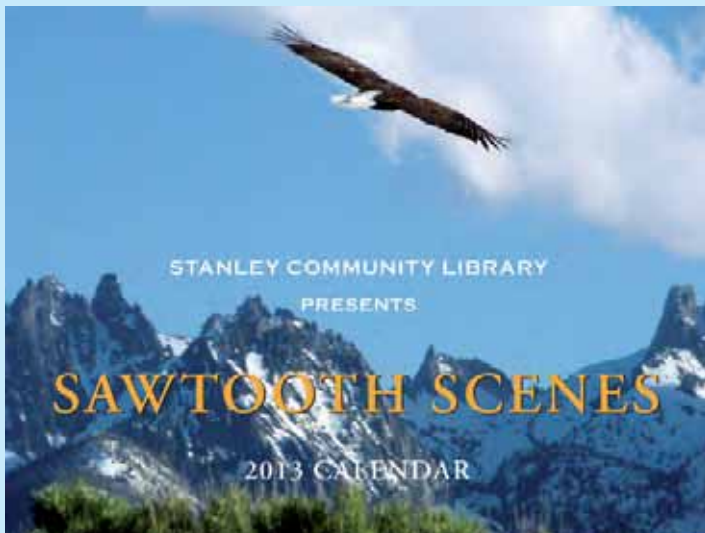


newspaper. The original glass negatives were saved by David Bigger and Terence McDonald who rescued the 14,000 plates from a skip at the former premises of the newspaper. The pictures date from the 1920s and 1930s and provide an insight into life before the Second World War. Irene Knox, Chief Executive of Libraries NI described the calendar as "a fantastic collector's item not only for residents of Derry-Londonderry but for family and friends, near and far." Libraries NI explores constantly how its Heritage collections can be exploited and made more accessible and the calendar is the result of such efforts. Although this resource is well known and used by visitors to Derry Central Library, the calendar provides people in Northern Ireland and beyond with an opportunity to appreciate the resources available within the library service. The National Library of Scotland also makes use of items from its collections in its calendar. The money raised from sales goes back into the work of the National Library of Scotland but Emily Young the library's Communications Officer also sees it "as a means to further raise awareness of the Library, the work that we do and the services we offer to all."

Calendars also make us aware of the passing of the months and years. Something reflected in an inscription in the Indianapolis Public Library that reads:

Time in minutes slips away,
First the hour and then the day.
Small the daily loss appears,
Till it soon amounts to years.

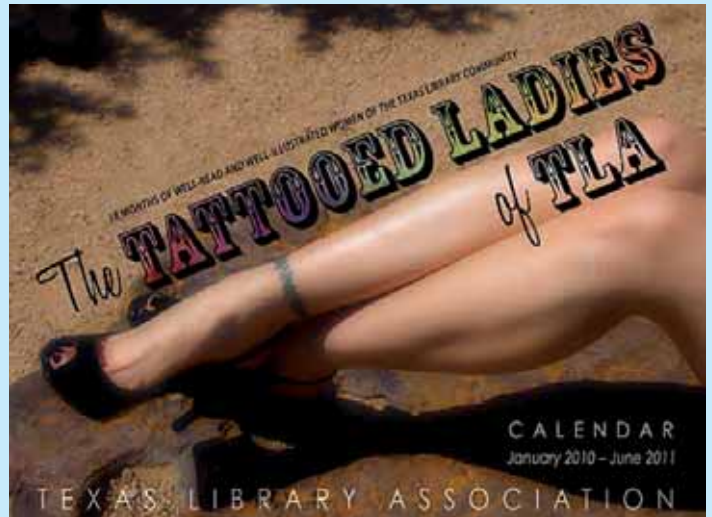
A thought readers of this journal may contemplate from time to time but it should also remind us that for our users, spending days, even years in libraries, is time well spent.



The Sawtooth Calendar features local scenery

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The Tattooed Ladies of TLA

Acknowledgements

We are pleased to acknowledge the following for their help in the preparation of this article:

Bromley House Library Nottingham

Carol Barstow, Librarian. Nicola Rae, Assistant Librarian
The calendar costs £10.00 plus £1.40 p&p and is only available from Bromley House. Details of BH at: <http://home.btconnect.com/BromleyHouseLib/bh-aboutus.html>

Guerrilla Readers

Marek Vetchy. Details of the calendar can be found at: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/28670476/Library-is-Sexy-2010>

Lawrence Public Library

Maureen Nimmo, Director. Louise Sandberg, Special Collections
Details of the Friends of Lawrence PL can be found at: <http://www.lawrencefreelibrary.org/About2.html>

Librarians without Borders (The University of Toronto chapter)

Melody Tacit. Co-chair of the fundraising committee team
Peter Madison, Photographer
Details of the calendar are at: <http://www.ischool.utoronto.ca/news/2012/students-make-calendar-librarians-without-borders>

Libraries NI

Glenn Beattie, Head of Strategic Marketing and Communications
Irene Knox, Chief Executive
Patricia Walker, Specialist Manager Heritage & Digitisation
Details of the calendar are at: <http://www.ni-libraries.net/items-for-sale/>
It costs £5.00 and a copy can be ordered through any of the branches within Libraries NI.

Men of the Stacks

Megan Perez
Details of the calendar are at: <http://menofthestacks.com/>

National Library of Scotland

Emily Young, Communications Officer

Northamptonshire Libraries

Carl Dorney, Central Library Manager

Redwood Library

Ray King, Friends of Redwood Library. To purchase the 2013 calendar contact Ray at: rayking@yahoo.com A single calendar costs \$12.68US including postage. 7 can be obtained for \$51.95. including postage. Paypal payments can be made to: rayking@gmail.com who will send a paypal invoice if needed.

SALIN

Ainsley Painter SALIN Executive Committee
Benjamin Wheel I Librarian, Library Collections
City of Tea Tree Gully
Civic Centre, 571 Montague Rd, Modbury
Details of the calendar are at: http://www.salin.org.au/?page_id=76

Stanley Community Library (Sawtooth Calendar)

Jane Somerville, Librarian
Details of the calendar can be found at: <http://sawtoothcalendar.com/>

Texas Library Association

Mary Ann Emerson, Publications & Graphics Specialist

Vermont Library Association

Helen Linda, Vermont Library Association Webmaster
Details of the 2012 Calendar are at: http://www.vermontlibraries.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/AD-VLA2012Calendar_patrons.pdf





NEXT GEN. LIBRARIANS: THE CONVIVIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY

< Daniel Grace

*"There are few things which are so overwhelmingly good that everyone should be forced to adopt them."
(Hine, 2008)*

"This is a great trap of the twentieth century: on one side is the logic of the market, where we like to imagine we all start out as individuals who don't owe each other anything. On the other is the logic of the state, where we all begin with a debt we can never truly pay. We are constantly told that they are opposites, and that between them they contain the only real human possibilities. But it's a false dichotomy. States created markets. Markets require states. Neither could continue without the other, at least, in anything like the forms we would recognize today." (Graeber, 2011)

Crisis

"Sorry, we don't take that paper any more."

The elderly gentleman nodded, gathered his bags and left the library.

Carol was tired of trotting out the same old line. How many times this week now had she effectively turned people away?

"Our subscriptions expired."

"We've nothing up to date on that subject I'm afraid."

"There's no wireless in this building unfortunately."

People continued to come through the door, but she felt less and less able to help them. Every week there was more from her line manager about cuts, delivered in that downbeat, cynical manner everyone seemed to be adopting now. The papers were full of stories about new austerity measures.

On top of that the nature of inquiry she received was changing. The needs were more desperate and basic than they had been for many years. How many requests for foodbanks this week alone? Yet she felt that these

factors were not being considered as the service changed around her. It was as if her day-to-day experience was irrelevant. And the result?

Society is moving on, and we're being left behind, she thought.

Public libraries are in crisis. This isn't just a crisis of funding, it is also a crisis of meaning and purpose. What are we? "Ideas stores", "Hives", community hubs, gateways, or just plain old libraries?

For many it often feels as if this discussion is being driven less by the consideration of meaning and purpose as it is by the crisis in funding. Our choices are constrained by an economic consensus imposed from above, a State no longer willing to take responsibility for public services. The solution? Privatisation, or something very much like it.

It may seem an exercise in futility to throw one more concept onto such a jumbled heap, especially one that chooses not to take as its starting point the harsh economic reality of austerity. However, we need to be more than pragmatic, we need a radical re-imagining of the service that provokes thought and argument and can, hopefully, provide some guidance for the challenges of the twenty-first century.

We need to dream.

Before the dream, the nightmare: collapse and resilience

Carol swept up the glass from the shattered windows. Last night had been the worst so far. Gangs had roamed from shop to shop taking whatever they could lay their hands on. The library hadn't been exempt from damage, but they had got off lightly. No one wanted ancient computers and tatty books. The supermarkets were hit the worst. Store fronts like broken television screens revealing aisle after aisle of empty shelving.

How is it we didn't see this coming? She thought.

In the background the radio broke from its usual bland pop rota for a news report.

"Communities are being warned that severe storms are spreading south from Scotland, where there has been over a years worth of rainfall in under forty-eight hours. Emergency planning committees are meeting now to prepare for the extreme conditions. The public are reminded not to undertake any unnecessary journeys for the next twenty-four hours. Petrol prices have risen again this month, compounding the fuel crisis. The leader of the opposition has called on the Energy Minister to resign over his alleged mishandling of the OPEC negotiations. And finally footballer John Cole has caused a storm on Twitter by suggesting..."

Carol tuned out and the music faded back in.

She checked around to make sure all the glass had been collected and pulled up a chair so she could reach and cover the smashed windows with sheets of cardboard.

Societies collapse. It isn't a happy thought, but it is a fact. These collapses vary in frequency, geographical spread, severity and duration, but they happen. Most importantly they can happen anywhere, even here. Every natural disaster, every riot tests a community's capacity to respond, to gather up and move on positively. This resilience is not an outcome, it is a process or an activity, it is what we do as a community to ensure that we continue functioning in the wake of such disasters.

We are living through an era in which we are witnessing changing climate, a decline in energy and food security, an increase in biodiversity loss and mounting economic turmoil. Resilience is a strategic concern for any community wishing to meet the challenges posed by these factors.



I spent a year or so investigating this concept and its relevance for public libraries for my MA thesis. I observed, I reflected and I read. I worked through my thoughts and my experiences and I came to several conclusions. The most significant of these was the idea that our library services have been co-opted by a logic exterior to them. This logic reveres industrial productivity and the market over all else. It is the same logic that pervades the State's approach to all public services. The measure of our success is to be found in the numbers we generate, the statistics we produce, our contribution to the growth of the economy.

The consequences of such a logic, the reduction of all community actions to a single bottom line, are diametrically opposed to the aims of building more resilient communities. The research shows that the more equal access to material resources, the greater the horizontal linkages between community members, the better the access to information and routes of communication, and the greater the capacity for community members to exploit these factors, the more capable a community is of exhibiting resilient behaviour when faced with disaster (Norris et al., 2008).

This logic finds its expression in a split, a disconnect between those of us working in libraries and the communities we serve. It is accentuated by the technologies we use; email, RFID, even the People's Network. It finds its justification in the ideology of professionalism, imposed by a particular class within libraries; management (Grace, 2011).

Such conclusions are radical and highly provocative. They are a starting point to create debate, to find out what we are doing right and what we are doing wrong when it comes to making our communities more resilient.

A convivial future

Carol sat down and sipped her tea. It was the first chance she'd had all morning to stop and reflect. The noise level had dropped somewhat since the bike maintenance workshop had finished. It seemed everyone rode a bike now the price of oil had sent petrol prices sky rocketing.

The peace wouldn't last long though. In twenty minutes the group that ran Tuesday afternoons Hack Lab would be there, tinkering with

soldering irons, circuit boards and that incredible 3D printer. The library building was one of the few left in the community now with a reliable power supply, and that was thanks to the same group rigging up solar panels and wind turbines on every spare inch of the exterior.

She smiled to herself. Yes, she went home tired every day, but things were so much better now.

Her reverie was interrupted by a mother and small child carrying a spade.

"Just returning this to the tool bank, shall I pass it to you?"

"If you could just pop round to the shed out back," replied Carol. "I think John's around somewhere."

The tool lending library had been John's idea, and he'd ploughed ahead with it, despite Carol's initial scepticism. Now it was second only in popularity to the bike workshops.

She looked around the inside of her library. It had changed so much in the last few years. And to think it had all begun with the Council putting the entire service out to tender. She'd been devastated. Then John came up with his bright idea.

Ivan Illich isn't a name much heard these days, but back in the 1970's he authored a series of short, radical texts calling to account many of the assumptions of modern society. His primary targets were the medical and educational systems, but he expanded his attack to include most modern institutions and the technology and ideology on which they relied. One of his most powerful concepts was that of conviviality.

As an idea it relies on a particular definition of tools that includes "productive systems for intangible commodities such as those which produce 'education', 'health', 'knowledge' or 'decisions'" (Illich, 1973; 20). The library certainly fits this bill. In order for a tool to be convivial it should "be easily used, by anybody, as often or as seldom as desired, for the accomplishment of a purpose chosen by the user", that is to say the user defines the tool and not the other way around (Illich, 1973: 22).

This is relevant to our capacity as libraries to promote community resilience, because that capacity relies directly on the nature of the relationship between us and the community. So for an

institution such as the public library to be convivial, and therefore promote community resilience, it needs to work against the logic imposed from outside the community. It needs to heal the split between those of us working in libraries and the communities we serve.



Ivan Illich authored a series of short, radical texts

In my studies I didn't focus exclusively on what is wrong in libraries. I found much to celebrate. I criticised the use of certain technologies, but to dismiss the People's Network wholesale would be ridiculous. The potential embodied in free internet access to all is incredible. It only becomes problematic from the point of view of resilience in our communities when such use is a compulsory element of survival in society, when the capacity for autonomous action is curtailed. When the tool dictates the behaviour.

Outreach is the other area in which I found the most hope for the future. When I say outreach I mean the kind of programs that build from the grass roots, rather than being imposed from above. Those of us working in the frontline are perhaps in the position most suited to discovering and nurturing these projects. Yet so often the structure of services works against this.

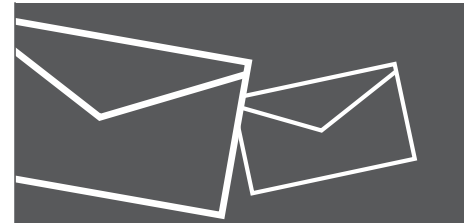
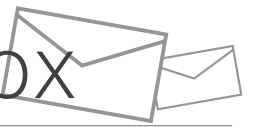
It is in working to understand and harness the needs and enthusiasms of the community in their widest sense, and not just in relation to a libraries traditional themes and topics, that the librarian must be most active. To paraphrase Mao Tse-Tung "the librarian must move amongst the community as a fish swims in the sea".

If the State won't do it, we will

"What we do is we form our own company, a workers co-op, and we bid for the contract, you see?"

Carol nodded. It was best just to nod when John got going.

"So you're in then Carol?"



Max Broome remembered in a Carnegie Medal winner

Max Broome whose obituary appeared in the August issue of *Update* and I were both working for the West Riding County Library in the early 1950s and our paths crossed there and several other times in our later careers. As is generally known Max was very keen on providing good library services for young people and during his time as County Librarian in the North Riding he organised Children's Book Weeks during which authors were asked to speak. On one occasion Pauline Clarke was invited. She must have been planning or writing *The Twelve and the Genii* about this time and, wanting a name for her boy hero, she was inspired to call him Max because she had been so impressed by Max's kindness. This book was duly published and was awarded the Carnegie Medal in 1962. As a children's librarian I heard her speak at a Youth Libraries Group meeting where she told this story. It all seems very appropriate as *The Twelve and the Genii* is about the Brontës and Haworth, of course, is in Yorkshire.



Sheila Ray

We regret that a number of mailbox items have had to be held over because of pressures on space

"Well...I'm not sure...I don't think we should have anything to do with the whole business."

"I'm not saying don't oppose it. We'll all do our best to stop it. But if we fail? Then they're going to do this and we either walk away, or have to try and make what we can of it."

"The best of a bad situation..." she replied.

"No, not just that. Right now we're just keeping our heads above water. Surviving, that's what we're doing. But we have some ideas about what our library should be doing, we have a few ideas about what our community needs. And the stuff we don't know, we'll find out. I haven't got it all figured out, it's..." John's voice tailed off as he waved his hands around. "Look, it won't be perfect, it'll be messy and it'll be bloody hard work, but we'll never forgive ourselves if we don't at least try."

Carol sighed and looked down at her empty pint glass. What the hell.

"OK, I'm in."

The crisis in public libraries is a microcosm of the crisis facing the whole of society. How do we survive the huge existential threats that will assail our communities in the twenty-first century? What will these communities look like? Where, if anywhere, do libraries fit into this picture?

When we consider the future of the public library service the pragmatic approach certainly has its uses. However, if we approach our understanding of what public libraries can be in a purely reactive manner, without a vision to oppose the bulldozer of austerity, we'll be left with nothing but fragments of a once great public institution.

The key to survival in the 21st century is understanding and embedding ourselves in our communities and helping them to adapt to the changing world around them. By moving towards a convivial model, that is as one with the community, I believe public libraries will best serve their communities and best ensure their survival in the years to come.

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Dan Grace currently works as a library and information assistant in a major city centre reference library. He hopes to begin a PhD in late 2013 to continue his research into the link between public libraries and community resilience. You can follow his progress at: <http://resilientlibrary.tumblr.com/>



St Marylebone veterans – Watch this space

Despite dwindling numbers, St Marylebone veterans continue their reunions, this year at the north London home of Ann Saunders, the former archivist. St Marylebone was undoubtedly a very special library, one of the best in London at that time – (pre amalgamation in 1965). Training was excellent and the collection with which we worked was first class.

Survivors were delighted to meet with former colleagues, especially those who had been unable to attend earlier reunions. Talk and discussions were lively and animated. The old magic was still there, and happy memories remain.

Will this be our swan song? Hopefully not; there were rumours of a meeting in central London next year or possibly in 2014, D.V. Watch this space.

Lorraine Williams

Sandwell Community History and Archives Service and Smethwick Heritage Museum June 2012

The Sandwell Community History and Archives Service collection is housed in the newly re-vamped Smethwick Library, on High Street, Smethwick. This is a brilliant collection of local materials, both printed and manuscript, which are enthusiastically and knowledgeably cared for by Richard Slaughter who is acting Archivist and Maureen Waldron, the Assistant Archivist. Sandwell was just a series of small villages until the industrial revolution when massive programme of industrialisation got underway. Sandwell became a hive of industry from great factories like the Soho Foundry and the Chance Brothers Glassworks to thousands of little nail and chain shops in peoples' back yards. Products made here can now be found all over the world from lighthouses to bridges. The towns and areas in Sandwell now include Wednesbury, West Bromwich, Tipton, Oldbury, Rowley Regis and Smethwick. The Service preserves the history of Sandwell as well as materials on local people and families. There is a magnificent photograph collection of more than 20,000 photos, a large and interesting map collection and a collection of local newspapers dating from about the 1850s. The Archive makes a point of actively collecting original documents from businesses and families and has a film and oral history recording section; the film collection dates from the early 1930s. Sandwell Community History and Archives Service is part of the nationwide County Archives Research Network (CARN) which allows readers, once registered, to use any



Smethwick Heritage, a small museum in a former Park Keeper's Lodge

of the participating record offices without having to provide further proof of identity. The Service has school records, electoral registers, records of council minutes and council committee minutes, the census returns for the area dating from 1841, and parish registers. The Service also holds the records of the local Coroner's Court and business archives which include the key collections for Camm and Co., of Smethwick, stained glass manufacturers, Chance Brothers Ltd., of Smethwick, glass manufacturers, Kenrick and Jefferson of West Bromwich, stationery manufacturers and Guest, Keen and Nettlefold (GKN) of Smethwick, nut, screw and fastening manufacturers. We thank the staff for their time in showing us around and for a very enjoyable visit.

Lunch was a trip to The Dog at Warley; an old and interesting hostelry. Fully

replete, the afternoon was rounded off by a trip to Smethwick Heritage, a small local museum housed in a former Park Keeper's Lodge at Victoria Park, also on the High Street, Smethwick. This is a voluntary organisation, an independent charity, with only one paid member of staff. This little museum, packed to the gunnels with memorabilia for the Smethwick area is charming; there is something interesting everywhere you turn. There are artefacts donated by local firms such as a huge carved and painted wooden royal coat of arms which used to hang in the boardroom of Mitchells and Butlers, a local brewery; also here are military uniforms, draymen's outfits, war memorabilia and examples of the famous glass made locally. I got the great thrill of having a go at the air raid siren and it sounded terrific. Crinoline hoops were once made here in Smethwick as were some of Ruskin's pots. Finally it was firmly pointed out to us that Smethwick is not part of Birmingham and not in the Black Country! Note was duly made.

On behalf of our little group I would like to thank the staff at Smethwick History and Archives Service and the volunteers, and the one member of staff, at Smethwick Heritage, who gave us such interesting talks and tours. I would also like to thank Jayne Armstrong, our group organiser, for all her work on our behalf.

Mary Casteleyn

PLANNED VISIT

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office Legal Library, King Charles Street, London SW1A 2AH – 18 April 2013 at 2.30pm

The FCO Legal Library maintains the Information Management Department and members of the team will talk to us about providing services to the FCO staff in the UK and overseas.

Cost: £3 to RMG payable on the day.

Please send applications to: Devana Pavlik on the form below. **Please remember to include a s.a.e. which will take a folded A4 sheet.**

The FCO Legal Library, King Charles Street, London SW1A 2AH – 18 April 2013 at 2.30pm

Send to Devana Pavlik, Flat 4 Court Royal, Carlton Drive, London SW15 2BJ. Tel: 020 8246 6786
email devanapavlik29@btinternet.com

I/We would like to participate in the **FCO Legal Library** visit

Name

Address

Telephone No e-mail

RMG COMMITTEES JULY AND OCTOBER



In the absence of Tom Featherstone, Joan Woollatt took the Chair with Secretary Alison Hall taking the minutes

Illness prevented RMG's Chair Tom Featherstone from attending the July Committee which preceded RMG's AGM. In his absence both the Committee and the AGM were chaired by Joan Woollatt. Tom returned to Chair the October meeting. At this it was reported that money has been forthcoming from CILIP in small amounts over the summer. Three new members have joined recently but means of approaching immediate retirees remains a problem. It was hoped that RMG will be able to link up with a CILIP marketing drive and noted that further publicity will be provided via January's *Update* which will contain an article about the RMG.

Joan had attended a meeting of web editors of groups and branches with the new CILIP webmaster. There will be training on the new system. Currently the CILIP website is not helpful for information about the RMG, and the committee expressed the need for a friendlier interface providing a direct link enabling newly retired members to join. The CILIP website does not indicate that one can join the RMG without belonging to CILIP.

In the future Bob Usherwood would like to create a link from the RMG webpage to an electronic version of *Post-Lib*. There are however no plans for this to replace the hard copy version. The reduction to three issues a year does cause problems for notifying members of visits but these, in general, remain popular with some, such as the National Archives at Kew, generating a repeat event. Future visits are planned for Senate House, the Foreign Office Library and Windsor Castle although this is apparently difficult to get in. Outside of London Jayne Armstrong is preparing a visit to the new library in Worcester, and the new Birmingham library, before it opens. Margaret Evans reported on her visit to CILIP's Big Day and readers can read her impressions on the back page.

RETIRED MEMBERS' GUILD

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING CILIP HQ 18 JULY 2012

Minutes

1 Chair's Welcome

In the absence of Tom Featherstone, Joan Woollatt, as acting Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Tom sent his best wishes and apologies

2 Apologies

Apologies were received from Tom Featherstone, Barry King, Jean Plaister, Sheila Wilson.

3 Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 6 July 2011

Peter Davies moved their adoption, seconded Peggy Hicks.

4 Annual Report

The Committee will be having elections this year, and there will be a notice on the website. Jean Plaister will be standing down. Anyone who is interested in serving on the Committee is invited to say so. It was mentioned that no special interest groups have elections any more, since rules changed in 2004, however, we have been told that we are not a 'group' and therefore not a formal part of CILIP. Joan will discuss this matter with Tom.

5 Hon. Treasurer's Report and Accounts

Joan presented the accounts. Due to dwindling income there will be only three issues of *Post-Lib* this year. As expenditure exceeded income last year, we are being careful. We still maintain a separate bank account, and have not been subsumed into centralised banking.

6 Membership Report

We have circa 530 members, and 30-35 associated members. Two new members joined this afternoon.

7 Post-Lib

Bob Usherwood explained that the reduction to three issues a year (April, early September and December), was due to financial pressures. This causes some problems in listing visits, and splitting long articles. The next issue will therefore have a number of long articles, including items on Childhood reading and libraries and the Titanic, and also contain librarians writing about their other passions. Promised for the future is something on the Living library project and the convivial public library in the Next Gen column. Bob had also discovered some old library magazines with articles that it might be interesting to reprint. New writers and topics are always welcome. Bob thanked all for their support, and encouraged authors to include pictures.

8 Appointment of Independent Examiners

The current independent examiners, Michael Saich and Geoffrey Dellar were proposed by Joan Woollatt and seconded by Margaret Evans.

9 Any other business of which notice has been given

Newly retired members

We are receiving a little help from CILIP regarding getting newly retired members to join the RMG, but the current membership person probably does not have as much time as her predecessor, who was very helpful. Membership information is sent to Bob for *Post-Lib* mailings.

Membership rates

It is a matter of conscience whether one pays as a retired member or unwaged.

The meeting closed 4.07pm

The meeting sent best wishes to Tom. Peter Davis thanked Joan for taking over the chair.

CILIP'S BIG DAY

I visited the CILIP Big Day and AGM at Newcastle in September, with the RMG hat on. Unfortunately networking possibilities were very limited and there were no tables laid out for information to be disseminated and no notice boards although I had asked about this in advance.

The AGM went smoothly enough. And the whole event was very well choreographed. The membership fees are to be held at last year's levels, with life membership no longer available. The finances are in better shape, because of the cost cutting measures and clearly CILIP has a treasurer who is au fait with accountancy rules and regulations. However, what seems missing is a membership growth strategy, with numbers again down on last year. This is now a too familiar issue. The Executive and management have every right to be pleased with getting CILIP back on financial track, but that is just the start.

It was a strange experience in many ways, as I recall really packed events with lots of lively interest group discussions, but this was really just a glorified AGM plus the awards ceremony and a few presentations from external folk. The liveliest and frankly most worrying in the morning was by Newcastle's cabinet member responsible for libraries, a fireman who thought volunteering the best way forward. Sad to say, many in the audience seemed quite content with that. There was no opportunity given for discussion or questions. This was offset by afternoon presentations, but by then the tone had unfortunately been set.



Newcastle City Library the location for CILIP's Big Day

Around 200 people attended, understandably mostly from the North East and some from Scotland. The lunch arrangements could have been handled better. The 'top table' took themselves and the award winners off to a private lunch which meant that there was little mingling or opportunity for Council and management to meet with members. I thought that was a really bad move, given that CILIP is not often present in the North East.

We were packed into a meeting room for the presentations, that probably comfortably held 100, and with no break-out groups it was pretty sterile. The special interest groups of CILIP were not in evidence and not really mentioned. It was all about finances and 'strategy' with a frankly incomprehensible guide to qualifications known as the Professional Knowledge and Skills Base that you can find as an insert in September's *Update*. All you need is a counter and some dice....

It was good to catch up with some old friends, and to enjoy Newcastle City Library. The members of staff were very nice indeed. But altogether CILIP is in a very different place from that which we all remember from the LA days.

Margaret Evans



A DATE FOR THE DIARY RMG LUNCH 2013

The 14th Annual RMG Lunch will take place at its now traditional place, **the Civil Service Club, off Whitehall, on Tuesday 12 February at 1pm.** The menu will consist of three courses, including a vegetarian option, wine and coffee. The cost has been held at £36 per head for the third year running. The Club contains a ground floor bar/lounge and there is a lift to the first floor Dining Room.

Full details are, as usual, available from Joe Wormald, 6 Redwood Close, Kenley, Surrey, CR8 5DA, Tel: 020 8660 3162, email Joehwormald@aol.com

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Retired Members Guild

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