

LONDON CLIP

Newsletter for CILIP in London

ALM London Inauguration



Lord Mackintosh (left), Stephen Douglass, Deputy Chair of ALM London (middle) Lord Mayor Michael Savory (right).

ALM London, the strategic development agency for London's archives, libraries and museums was officially inaugurated on 18 January at a reception hosted by the Corporation of London at the Guildhall.

Stakeholders from the sector attended the launch and heard speeches by the Lord Mayor of London Michael Savory, Mark Wood, Chair of the MLA, and the Rt Hon Lord Macintosh of Haringey, Minister for Media and Heritage.

Graham Fisher, Chief Executive of ALM London, and Stephen Douglass, Deputy Chair, hailed the achievements of ALM London since its inception in April and celebrated plans for the future at the launch.

ALM London's advocacy, development work and funding for the library sector have already made an impression on the capital, and ALM London's dedicated Libraries Development Officer Dermot

Kennedy has been overseeing a number of exciting library-related projects.

These include funding for three reading promotions (delivered by the LLDA).

Graham Fisher outlines future plans: "Involving archives, libraries and museums in London's Olympic Bid is high on ALM London's immediate agenda, and our recent grants programme for activities during the International Olympic Committee's visit to London this February aims to raise public interest both in the Olympic campaign and in the work of local libraries."

Also in the pipeline is a project to increase the knowledge and use of libraries and children's books in teacher training. ALM London recently commissioned the first ever survey on the economic impact of London's, libraries, museums and archives (see p. 4).

Some Words for Mayor Livingstone

Get out your diary and book the evening of Thursday 19 May 2005 from 6-8 pm. Come to CILIP in London's AGM and hear three short presentations on 'What Ken Livingstone should know about the rich variety of London's Library and Information Services'.

The AGM will be held at CILIP HQ (7 Ridgmount Street, London WC1E 7AE). It will celebrate the Branch's first birthday. Serious refreshment and hobnobbing will follow. A collection will be taken to rebuild libraries destroyed in the Tsunami. Full details later.

London Libraries Recommend

Following the success of last summer's promotion of librarians' favourites which attracted press attention in the *Evening Standard* (Librarians list favourite novels - 50 great summer reads, 3 August, p.16), The London Libraries Development Agency (LLDA) renamed its pan-London reading campaigns. The PR success is now part of a wider strategy to use reading promotions as a tool to attract new library users and raise awareness of the range of other services available.

London Libraries Recommend...Reel Fiction, 50 books that have inspired film also generated press interest, again in the *Evening Standard* and also *Metro, Daily Express* and online at BBCi news. A website competition in conjunction with the London Film Festival to win tickets to a film premiere brought new visitors to the London Libraries website www.londonlibraries.org.uk (see below). These visitors were in general younger than typical respondents to reading promotions in the past and the LLDA is keen to continue in developing different channels to reach new audiences for library services, whether virtual or real.



FUTURE EVENTS 2005

Evening meetings

These meetings are held in The Sekforde Arms, Sekforde Street, London EC1, 6.30 pm.

Contact Phillip Powell
ppowell@iwm.org.uk, 020 7416 5345.

8 March, *Freedom of Information - the story so far*, Heather Brooke

12 April, *Scientific Communication*, Barry Mahon

10 May, *Libraries and Non-Readers*, Fiona Tarn & Jana Cameron

14 June, *Writing about the Web*, Phil Bradley

12 July, *Internet Analysis*, Alison Stacey

13 September, *X-Refer Plus*, Darryl Rayner

Other events

13-15 March, *London Book Fair*, London Olympia. Contact www.lbf-virtual.com

26 April, 24/7, organised by CPD25, 9.30 am - 4.15 pm, The Hatton, 51-53 Hatton Garden, London EC1. Contact Sasha Poulter holebrc@wmin.ac.uk

19 May, *CILIP in London AGM*, CILIP HQ, 6.00-8.00 pm

Longer versions of some of these reports are available on our website www.cilip.org.uk/branches/byregion/london

Bliss Classification

Tegwen Williams reports on the Sekforde Arms meeting of 12 October

Heather Lane, then the Librarian at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, and Secretary of the Bliss Classification Association (BCA), provided a fascinating talk on the Bliss Classification (BC) scheme which was an evening of discovery for many.

The original version of the scheme became known as the Bliss Classification 1 (BC1) and was adopted in many libraries in the UK, Australia and New Zealand during the 1940s and 50s. In particular, it was heavily incorporated into the work of libraries at Oxford colleges. The use of the initial system devised by Bliss in the 1970s increased and was successfully used in the areas of the social sciences, psychology and probation collections.

The BCA was very much the instigator of the production of the revised BC2 scheme. BC2 is regarded as a new system rather than merely a revision and uses only the broad outline of Bliss's original scheme, but with a much richer vocabulary by which to classify titles and is planned to appear in 22 tailorable parts.

Heather Lane had the large task of transforming Sidney Sussex Library and used the BC scheme as a starting point for change. Primarily, the library was not user-friendly: many students complained that they could not find the material they wanted and user numbers had declined as a result. The collection also needed to be weeded and the remaining 36,000 books re-catalogued in accordance with the BC scheme from a single author card catalogue.

The driver of change in this particular case was the implementation and availability of the BC2 system. It was chosen because it would work well with the collection, which is not completely specialist. BC2 is a modern, evolving system of classification and copes well with the inter-disciplinary nature of a lot of textbooks. Despite the advantage of the BC2 scheme's flexibility, the scale of the project was enormous and took a full two years to complete since a self-issue and security system was also installed to complete the transformation of the library into a modern facility.

After the conclusion of the project, the number of books issued rose fivefold and users commented that they could now find the books they needed. Also

the library was full each day! Other colleges have now followed their example, such as Jesus College. The BCA hopes to implement the next stage of the project soon, which is to make the scheme available electronically, thus bringing it to a world wide audience. Moreover, it is still being developed and adapted with more subjects being added all the time and updates continuing to be published in the BCA bulletin.

The meeting stimulated much discussion afterwards and we were honoured to have in the audience, Jack Mills, the BCA Chair and the main editor and a driving force behind publishing the BC2 volumes.



Dr Leonard Will at The Sekforde Arms

Thesauri and Classification

Tegwen Williams reports on Leonard Will's talk of 9 November

In recent years, the Internet has helped to change the face of

classification and the development of thesauri. The phenomenon of metadata, in particular, has attracted much attention when discussing the organisation of electronic information resources. November's meeting saw leading speaker, Dr Leonard Will, an independent consultant in this field, visit The Sekforde Arms.

Will espouses the view that the expressions metadata and taxonomy are modern terms for old ideas. In both cases, there are basic principles to apply which information professionals have been performing for many years. The word taxonomy, especially, is a 'woolly' term that has caused confusion. Both terms are seen as complementary ways of grouping concepts. As the terms of metadata and taxonomy have left people perplexed, Will puts forward a different terminology - Knowledge Organisation Systems (KOS) - he feels this is a better way to express these ideas. The building blocks of all knowledge organisation systems are concepts and relationships.

Dr Will described how thesauri and classification schemes are alternative ways of showing concepts and their relationships. They are complementary and can be used in conjunction with one another.

After giving detailed descriptions of the way thesauri and classification systems operate, Dr Will summarised how in this age of technology, computers could be used in a more complex way to help information organisation. He outlined some of the many types of software which can help in the development and editing of thesauri. As thesaurus development is continuous, it may be worth considering cooperative thesaurus construction and use, thus sharing workloads. It needs a knowledgeable thesaurus editor and cooperation and input from indexers and users. Any input from other professionals and feedback from users can only assist in the progress of the thesaurus.

London, Knowledge City: an opportunity for our profession?

Summary of a talk to the Branch by CILIP President Margaret Haines at CILIP HQ on 5 November 2004

Maggie described a "knowledge city" as a city that has strategically embarked on a mission to purposefully encourage the nurturing of knowledge, innovation, science and creativity within the context of an expanding knowledge-based economy and society. She noted the low profile of libraries in discussions of London as a knowledge city, despite the amount they can offer, and attributed this to: low key advocacy targeted at one or two sectors only; limited sectoral leadership; limited influence in government at all levels in London; poor cross-sectoral cooperation within London; and funding not matching expectations.

To increase awareness of the full potential of libraries, Maggie urged that London LIS professionals demonstrate the relevance of their services to London, especially by providing evidence of the impact of their services.

Considering the role of CILIP in London, Maggie suggested we should encourage partnerships across the LIS sector and with other bodies who might be allies for "London: Knowledge City". We should also develop high level advocacy skills, spot and encourage future leaders in the profession, and present a united confident front. Meanwhile the role of CILIP HQ should be to engage in dialogue with Whitehall, influence policy-makers, encourage reflective practice, facilitate partnerships and networks, and develop a research strategy.

Open Access: a panacea or something to be panned?

Richard Wakeford reports on a talk by Charles Oppenheim on 18 January 2005

The Sekforde Arms had the 'house full' notice up at the January meeting to hear Charles Oppenheim of Loughborough University on the future of Open Access (OA) publishing.

Research library budgets are in crisis as journal subscription costs escalate but the solution offered by Big Publishers, the electronic delivery of "Big Deal" packages of titles is no solution even if extra 'goodies' - e.g. *The Journal of Happiness Studies* - are thrown in.

Will OA be the panacea, Charles asked, explaining that there are three distinct shades of OA. Firstly there are journals that are free to readers and to authors and costs are absorbed by the publishers, usually academics working on a pro bono basis. Then there are journals which are free to readers but where authors are charged by publishers in business for profit. Finally there are repositories which are managed by universities and are focused either on a subject area or the papers produced by a university's researchers.

Authors deposit their articles following publication in a conventional subscription journal but sometimes only after an embargo period agreed with the commercial publisher. The case made by the supporters of OA (as in the recent report of the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee) is that public research should be free and widely available to readers while at the same time benefiting authors with greater exposure to readers.

OA is not without its critics though (as shown in the Government's response to the Select Committee) - Can the business model for OA journals be sustained? Will the quality of papers bear up when authors have to pay whether their work is published or not? Charles concluded that it was still too early to answer these questions but predicted that in a few years there will be a mixed publishing economy. Certainly some OA titles will flourish but it is unlikely that OA will displace subscription based journals to any extent.

He ended his survey by awarding repositories a hot tip for growth, pointing to the recent change in the attitude of many publishers who are now ready to give authors permission to archive and the advent of search tools like Google Scholar which search all archives simultaneously.

Who's in Charge?

Dear Editors

Firstly - many congratulations on the new newsletter! I hope that the write-ups of Sekforde Arms meetings will be a regular feature. I was sorry that I was away for Tim Coates's talk in September, which was clearly a lively session. I was particularly struck from Neil Davies's report of the event that Mr Coates was unimpressed with libraries' business planning, and that many "abused the whole notion of [annual library] plans and merely filled 108 pages of paper with whatever they wished to include". For me, one of the most encouraging signs of progress in public libraries over the past few years is how much the quality of planning has improved. Better plans have been accompanied by improved performance in a number of areas, including range of services (not least electronic), extended access and more targeted reach, even in quite modestly funded library authorities. Yes, the marketing could be better, and more could be done to get the message across to users, non-users and politicians. But library services up and down the country are increasingly being recognised by their authorities as having the knowledge, experience, infrastructure (and sometimes even the mindset!) to help them deliver corporate objectives in social inclusion, community cohesion, learning, regeneration. So come on Tim, let's have some credit where credit is due!

Diana Grimwood-Jones

Tim Coates responds:

The letter raises two questions, one about library planning, the other about the purpose of public libraries.

On the first subject it is difficult to comment further without some specific examples, but I would be delighted to explain what I mean by looking at one specific plan if anybody wanted to do that. I apply two criteria to every sentence of a plan: the first is "Would a member of the public understand what this means?" and the second is "Will you be able to tell when this planned activity has been accomplished?" Your readers may wish to try these questions on a plan for their own authority or library.

On the second subject there have been a number of views put forward to the current select committee hearings and it will be very interesting to hear what the MPs say when they report in the New Year.

My own views are: firstly that it is not for librarians to decide what the service is for; the service is paid for and used by the public and they are entitled to define its purpose. Councils (or even MPs) are only there to interpret and anticipate what the public want. If use of the service has gone down, then they have interpreted incorrectly. Secondly (and I am alone in this and recognise it) the description that Diana gives of what library services are achieving may be admirable and deserve credit, but is not what the public want them to do. The public would normally describe a library as a place of books, reading and information and one that can be used for private study. What Diana describes is not that.

Librarians (especially the Society of Chief Librarians in their submission to the Select Committee, which is very explicit) say that their performance should no longer be measured in terms of book loans. I say that it should be: I find nowhere in any public policy document a view that libraries are no longer essentially about books and reading; and I find many statements that indicate that whatever else a library does, those activities should not diminish the quality of what is offered as reading material. That is certainly clear in Framework for the Future, the Audit Commission reports and in the last Select Committee report.

However what is offered as reading material most certainly has declined in quality, and that is why I say that library managers have failed in their capacity of running libraries, and that they had no business and are in no position to attempt to re-define the criteria against which they are judged.

I find it hard to criticise councils, because I am sure I said in the Sekforde Arms, councillors receive very poor information from Chief Librarians who are their only source of professional advice. Which brings us back to the importance of clear and comprehensible library plans.

Economic Impact of London's Archives, Libraries and Museums

ALM London has appointed Burns Owens Partnership (BOP) to develop an evidence-based economic development strategy for London's archives, libraries and museums and to produce accompanying advocacy materials to ensure that the sector can effectively demonstrate its impact and role in contributing to London's economic prosperity.

ALM London points out that London's archives, libraries and museums make an enormous contribution to the economic prosperity of the capital (for example, through their engagement in tourism and the knowledge economy), but their contribution is rarely recognised because there is little evidence of the economic impact of the sector. Burns Owens Partnership is to produce an economic impact report and economic development strategy.

Workplace of the Future

An interactive installation at the British Library showcases the integration of the latest in furniture design and wireless technology. Organised by the British Library and Building Zones, the exhibition is on display until 11 March.

Until now, public hotspots have simply grafted wireless technology onto existing furniture combinations. These are not always ideal in terms of ease of use. Ten furniture designers were commissioned by the Library to provide innovative solutions to the requirements of 'nomadic' working; they had to take into account the needs of WiFi users in public spaces, in particular: an integral power supply - to minimise trailing electrical flexes; a secure storage space for bags, equipment and documents; and good ergonomics - including comfort, lighting and safety.

Fully available for use by the Library's WiFi users, the furniture on display is designed to accommodate and complement wireless products and services. Visitors will also get the chance to sample future WiFi hotspot services: primarily new voice services where users can make 'free' phone calls

from their laptop, PDA or (imminently) mobile phones, using software called a softphone. Softphones allow work to become seamless - rather than voicemail, a phone icon on the user's laptop will ring via connection to the wireless hotspot.

Whilst the furniture installation is on display, users will be encouraged to provide feedback on everything from security to storage, comfort to cost. This public consultation will help inform future plans, should the Library choose to install a permanent public working environment within the WiFi hotspot space.

LMU Book Launch

On 16 December, London Metropolitan University celebrated the publication of books by three members of the Information Management School with a talk and reception. The titles, which are published by Chandos, are: *Information Literacy: A practitioner's guide* by Susie Andretta (pbk £39, hbk £55), *Classification in Theory and Practice* by Dr Susan Batley (pbk £39, hbk £57) and *Why Intranets Fail (and how to fix them)* by Luke Tredinnick (pbk £39, hbk £57).



Sue Batley at LMU Launch

Online Meeting

Over 10,600 people attended the recent annual Online Information exhibition and conference held at Olympia from 30 November - 2 December 2004. Content Management Europe co-located with Online Information for the second year. New show features included: Enterprise Document & Records Management (EDRM), Enterprise Search Solutions and ePublishing Solutions. The highlight of the meeting was a keynote session with Jakob Nielsen, best-selling author and founding father of web and Internet usability.

Radio frequency identification (RFID) is a method of remotely storing and retrieving data using devices called RFID tags. An RFID tag is a small object, such as an adhesive sticker, that can be attached to or incorporated into a product. RFID tags contain antennas to enable them to receive and respond to radio-frequency queries from an RFID transceiver.

Graham Dash describes the use of RFID in Sutton Libraries

RFID made its introduction in the London Borough of Sutton Libraries in the Phoenix Library on the Roundshaw estate. This library opened at the end of September with two 3M 8210 SelfCheck units in a new and stunning design, marking a major change from the standard 'grey box' previously supplied by 3M. There is also one staff workstation that uses RFID.

The Central Library re-opened on 5 January 2005 with four 3M 8210 SelfCheck units and a single 3M 888 SmartCheck unit. Two of the SelfCheck units are set to provide both Checkout and Checkin with the other two being Checkout only. The SmartCheck is the main Checkin unit, and this is the first of its kind in the world using the latest 3M RFID technology and software versions.

Stock in the two libraries has been tagged with RFID labels that hold the item barcode number and also include a switchable chip for the security system. All stock is issued via RFID pads with the SelfChecks currently being restricted to books.

Self Service usage in the Central library for the issue of books has increased from 66% to 85% within three weeks and is expected to rise still further. Staff released from standard circulation duties have been employed in providing customers with a more approachable and personalised service.

Future plans are to extend the use of RFID to all libraries although this may not include self service at all service points.

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