

LONDON CLIP

Newsletter for CILIP in London

Chris Smith to Speak at CILIP Members' Day



The Rt Hon Lord Smith

The Rt Hon Lord Smith of Finsbury, former Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, is to give a lecture at CILIP's Members' Day on 27 October. The lecture, which will follow the AGM, is hosted by CILIP in London. Afterwards there will be a reception. This format echoes that of Members' Days held by the Institute of Information Scientists in the past. The branch has organised the meeting in response to requests by former IIS members. Lord Smith, who was previously MP for Islington South and Finsbury, is now Director of the Clore Leadership Programme.

Family Learning Week



explore excite expand

Family Learning Week is 8-16 October 2005. The Campaign for Learning is encouraging archives, libraries and museums to promote their

family learning initiatives via a national listing of events available online at www.campaign-for-learning.org.uk/events/eventsindex.asp.

A new 2005 Planning Guide is available to help organisations develop events for this week. It can be downloaded at: www.familylearningweek.com.

£4m for Public Library Improvements

Culture Minister David Lammy has announced that the funding programme for library improvement is to be extended for a further two years, with £4 million of new money. 'A free and up-to-date public library service must be at the heart of Government cultural and social policy in the 21st century', he said.

Honorary Secretary for Branch

Anna Martin has become Honorary Secretary for CILIP in London. She takes over from Edward Dudley, who has been Acting Honorary Secretary since the formation of the branch.

Anna has experience of life in different sectors of the profession: she has worked in public libraries (Essex), a law library, and is currently at City University Library.

'It is a great privilege to sit at a table surrounded by so many interesting and knowledgeable people already on the committee,' she says. 'I love libraries and information work and I love working in London, so it is a logical step to join the committee and help publicise and develop the valuable work done in this city by our profession. I am particularly looking forward to meeting people from different workplaces and finding out what's going on around the London information world. I am very happy to be contacted by anyone who has a query about the organisation.'

Contact details for all the committee are on the website at www.cilip.org.uk/branches/byregion/london/about/committee.



Anna Martin. Photograph by kind permission of Gordon Ridgewell

Appointment for Refugee Project

London Libraries Development Agency (LLDA) has reappointed Helen Carpenter as Co-ordinator for the Welcome to Your Library Project, which in its new phase will extend the work to public libraries across the country.

Welcome To Your Library seeks to support refugees and asylum seekers in becoming active and participative members of society by helping them access services through using their local library. Helen co-ordinated the pilot project for LLDA from 2003-4 and has a background of over 20 years in regeneration and community development work, as well as being a qualified librarian.

The success of the pilot led Paul Hamlyn Foundation to award LLDA £250,000, its largest single Reading and Libraries Challenge Fund grant.



Helen Carpenter

Distribution Problems

We apologise for the delay that many CILIP in London members experienced in receiving the last issue of London CLIP. Tim Buckley Owen explains: 'This was caused by distribution problems at CILIP's main printers Headley's which affected a number of Branch newsletters. We have since had detailed discussions with colleagues at Headley's, and have tightened up on procedures in some instances, to try to prevent the problem from occurring again.' If readers have not received previous issues of London CLIP, please contact Tracy James-Lieberman (tracy.james-lieberman@cilip.org.uk).



Fiona Tarn and Jana Cameron, speakers at the meeting on 10 May

Getting to Know Croydon

Fiona Tarn of Croydon Central Library and Jana Cameron of Croydon Museum Service were speakers at the May meeting, 'Working together: meeting basic skills needs in Croydon'.

The 'Get On' project in Croydon was developed after six members of Croydon libraries staff attended Basic Skills awareness training from January to March 2003 at Orpington College. After their training, staff wanted to put into practice what they had learned on the course. They applied for funding from the LSC (Learning and Skills Council) and a total of £28,000 was received. This funding enabled staff to enhance their existing Basic Skills provision.

Within the library, staff looked at the services they provided and what skills were required to use the services fully. For example, signage and labelling were enhanced and a decision was taken to abandon the need for membership forms to join the library; now prospective users simply needed to turn up with a piece of identification. The shelving arrangements were also improved to make the material more attractive and they were put in a more prominent position.

There was a resource audit and it was found that the existing Basic Skills stock although good was labelled negatively and made to look unattractive. More stock was purchased for 11 of the 13 Croydon Libraries and to help the selection process several staff visited the Institute of Education for ideas. These new resources were promoted to Basic Skills classes and community groups, both within and outside of formal learning environments.

English and community language postcards with bare necessities of the services were used as advertisements. To help get rid of the stigma attached to the borrowing of Basic Skills books, they were adorned with the 'Get On' sticker and these were on both fiction and non-fiction stock. This 'Get On' sticker was linked into the national campaign of the same name.

In addition to the library heads receiving Basic Skills awareness training, the whole library team were trained by a cascade process. A staff awareness sheet was distributed and all staff were expected to act positively to these changes. It is now also part of the library staff induction programme.

The launch of Inspiring Learning for All by the MLA in 2004 acted as a catalyst to the further development of the 'Get On' project. The 'Getting to Know Croydon' course was developed as a result. This course was a cross domain initiative involving museum, local studies and library staff, along with continuing education and training services. It was delivered as a pilot scheme to a New Deal ESOL class from January to March 2005, with plans to extend it further as it has been such a success.

Almost all of the participants were refugees or asylum seekers and they were very keen to learn. The 11-week course was designed to encourage students to improve their skills, to help students to feel familiar with the Croydon Clocktower complex (where many of the resources are housed) and to promote the idea of reading for pleasure.

It included lots of group work helping individuals to feel comfortable expressing their own opinions. There were also opportunities to use the

Clocktower resources and new technologies. Of all the activities, the days at the Local Studies Library proved very popular and a good ice breaker. It was a chance to find out more about the local area especially as many of the participants were new to the area.

The scheme has achieved much by increasing the awareness of what goes on within the services involved, particularly amongst students and their teachers. Students showed a marked improvement in confidence and by the end of the course many of them were turning up early for lessons so they could use the facilities.

Holistic Internet Searching

Alison Stacey, speaker at the June meeting, first became interested in the topic of Internet searching while working at Cambridge Regional College on a project on Internet search terms. After co-authoring a book on the subject (*Effective Information Retrieval From the Internet: An Advanced Users' Guide*) and setting up a website, she and her husband now have their own company called WebInfo Pro. They aim to assist professionals in the information sector to develop systematic use of the Internet, focusing particularly on quality issues. In addition they will advise on Internet searching and enhance the Internet experience for the user. The company will officially launch in January 2006.

According to Stacey, in order to access the vast amount of information on the Internet, information professionals have tended to develop personal strategies rather than focus on learning how to use the various search engines available. An effective searching process can enhance the quality of the results retrieved by the user and enable the user to successfully locate 'hard-to-find' information. High quality results are those that meet the requirements of the user's research. The competing pressures of speed versus accuracy can affect the searching procedure so it is important that the requirements of the research are made clear.

The first questions to ask are what kind of information do you want to find and which search engine will most effectively allow you to do this. Generally there is a tendency to rely on one specific engine, but altering the choice depending on your requirements may

improve the quality of the information found. The next stage is formulating the actual query you want answered, which is pivotal to the whole process. Using very specific terms will mean that the chance of having useful hits is increased, whereas using narrow terms may result in a decrease in search engine variations. At the same time, the linguistic approach you wish to take must be considered. When selecting terms, the use of answering terms rather than questioning words can sometimes be more effective.

The final factor to bear in mind is bias and accuracy, which is especially important in a complex search. There is perhaps a lack of awareness amongst users about bias and unfair information and it is little acknowledged in research. A user should be able to have confidence in the information they are relying upon and be able to easily ascertain its source. Sometimes the accuracy of the information is vital and a careful examination must be carried out.

Alison's work is also concerned with automated searches and although this may only really be relevant to those who are already fairly technologically savvy, it can help to push back the boundaries of searching. There are alternative programmes, such as Firefox, that can be used to navigate the Internet and their use may resolve some of the issues of bias. These alternatives are not difficult to use and can prove to be especially good for complex searches. The computer programming language Python must be used to run Firefox and this can be downloaded from various locations but the disappearance of host sites can cause a problem.



Alison Stacey

CILIP in London's First AGM

Report by Edward Dudley

Some 42 members came to CILIP in London's first AGM at CILIP HQ on 19 May. After the usual business – annual report, finance, etc., which unusually led to some welcome discussion – people settled down to the main fare of the evening: 'What Mayor Livingstone should Know about the Rich Variety of London's Library and Information Services'.



City Hall - Photographer Adam Hinton

The idea for the meeting arose from the publication of the Mayor's Cultural Strategy in 2004. This document had many references to public libraries. However, of the rest of the biggest concentration of library and information services (LIS) in Europe and possibly in the world, only the British Library was mentioned.

Liz Chapman, Library, University College London, dealt with academic libraries in an open letter to the Mayor; the rich complex of public libraries was demonstrated by John Lake, Barbican Library; Tayo Ajibade of City law firm Baker and McKenzie spoke of London's many and different workplace LIS. All these services underpin, make real, the Mayor's assertion of London as Knowledge Capital.

Ken Livingstone and others at our striking City Hall (favourite eyrie for BBC reporters against the back drop of Tower Bridge) were unable to attend the meeting, but Edward Dudley, Branch Acting Hon Treasurer, was later invited to meet Judith Woodward, the Mayor's Senior Policy Adviser for Culture, and Justine Simmons, Cultural Strategy Manager, for a brief discussion during which he outlined the role of CILIP and the Branch. He is hopeful that the rich variety of London's LIS has moved up a notch in our Ken's thinking and on City Hall's agendas.

Evening meetings

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

Contact Phillip Powell
Phillip@montanaroad.plus.com

13 September, Writing about the web, Phil Bradley

11 October, Know and tell: writing our script for a smarter world, Debby Shorley

Other CILIP in London events

16 August, Summer outing to Norwich. Contact Ralph Adam
sd324@city.ac.uk

24 November, Social event, 5.30-9.00pm, 7 Ridgmount Street, London WC1E 7AE

Other events

26-27 September, Fourth Anglo-German Seminar on Library History: Libraries and Innovation London. Contact Dorothea Mieke: dorothea.mieke@bl.uk

10-11 October, Internet Librarian International, Copthorne Tara Hotel, London. Contact www.internet-librarian.com

27 October, CILIP Members' Day, Brunei Gallery, SOAS, London. Contact conferences@cilip.org.uk

8 November, RFID in Libraries Conference, Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, London. Contact John Woolley john.woolley@cilip.org.uk

11 November, Developing public libraries: national strategies in Europe, London. Contact Rachel Kirkwood kirkwood@london.goethe.org

29 November – 1 December, Online Information 2005, Olympia Grand Hall, London. Contact www.online-information.co.uk

Tsunami Collection

Since the last newsletter, collections taken at CILIP in London meetings have raised £9.31 on 10 May, £19 on 14 June, £7.50 on 12 July and £39.61 at the Branch AGM on 19 May 2005. This amounts to a total of £93.42, including the £18 previously raised.

Archives for London

Archives for London (AfL) was launched on 6 July 2005 at London Metropolitan Archives. AfL intends to provide a single focal point for both practitioners and users of archives in London. It aims to build on present good practice, information sharing and archive campaigns established by GLAN (Greater London Archives Network), LAUF (London Archives Users Forum) and other networking bodies, while providing greater coherence in presenting the capital's archives agenda to the outside world. The keynote address at the launch was given by Lisa Jardine, Director of the Centre for Editing Lives and Letters (CELL) at Queen Mary, University of London. Further information at www.archivesforlondon.org.

Skills for Life Standards

ALM London has launched Skills for Life standards for London's archives, libraries and museums. ALM London's new Skills for Life Compact is aimed at improving services to people with Basic Skills needs such as literacy, numeracy and language. The compact sets service standards to five key themes: Plans and partnerships, Staff and training, Stock and budgets, Promoting learning/reader development, and Regional and national working.

The ALM London Skills for Life Compact is principally aimed at London's libraries although many of its themes are readily applicable to archives and museums. Under the compact, library branches will register as providing a standard, medium or advanced service depending on how fully they anticipate meeting the service level expectations.

For example, a branch providing advanced level services to Basic Skills users would:

- Have at least one member of staff who had completed a Level 2 course on Supporting Adult Learners.
- Have feedback mechanisms in place to enable response to learners' views.
- Have library sessions or visits to classes to include Skills for Life

reading groups, reading chains and special events to promote reading for pleasure (minimum 10 per annum).

- Have outreach and partnership events to attract new learners to library activities (minimum three per annum).
- Host at least one 30-hour course per annum in partnership with a Basic Skills provider.
- Offer national testing and referrals (e.g. Move On or BBC).

Francesca Elu, Learning Development Manager at ALM London said: 'There are over 600 archives, 1,500 libraries and 250 museums in London. When public libraries alone record 51 million visits a year you can only imagine the huge contribution they make to the lives of Londoners with Basic Skills needs. The ALM London Skills for Life Compact will promote a consistent offer for all learners as well as support London's archives, libraries and museums deliver on national priorities'.

Eurocrime

London's public libraries have launched a promotion of 50 European crime novels. The Passport to Murder list includes classic writing such as that of Georges Simenon as well as contemporary authors like Henning Mankell and Barbara Nadel. Story settings

stretch across the continent from Iceland in the north to Greece in the south and from Spain to Russia. The promotion, which is led by the London Libraries Development Agency, is running in all the capital's 395 public libraries.

Flyers publicising the list are available in libraries, the European cultural institutes in London and selected bookshops. More information on titles, which are available as talking books, in Braille and in large print, is available at www.londonlibraries.org/uk/read. This website also features reviews of the selected novels written by librarians and a quiz related to the Eurocrime genre.

Passport to Murder is funded by Arts Council England, London and ALM London.



Lynne Brindley, Chief Executive of the British Library

Permanent Contract for Lynne Brindley

Lynne Brindley, Chief Executive of the British Library, has accepted a permanent contract from the Board of the British Library, following her five-year tenure as Chief Executive.

The announcement was made to staff by Lord Eatwell, Chairman of the British Library Board. The offer was made with the unanimous agreement of the Board and supported by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport.

Lynne Brindley joined the Library on 1 July 2000, being both the first library information professional and woman to hold the position of Chief Executive.

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