

LONDON CLIP

Newsletter for CILIP in London

Tag cloud

London Libraries Development Agency (LLDA) has launched a beta service on the London Libraries website (www.londonlibraries.org/listssubjects.jsp) – a tag cloud of keywords describing collection content that is presented on-screen as clickable links. This allows quick and easy browsing of online databases in London public libraries and specialist collections held by all public and selected specialist and academic libraries quickly and easily.

The system makes use of information held in a number of remote databases and brings them together through the London Libraries interface. Keywords are drawn from UK Archival Thesaurus (UKAT), a controlled vocabulary. The information about opening hours and accessibility of the libraries concerned also uses a shared services approach with data harvested regularly from the national library dataset managed by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA). The idea for the tag cloud evolved from Inspire, a national library scheme, which gives members of the public access to libraries in universities and otherwise restricted collections.

The London Libraries website uses the same UKAT vocabulary to describe the 60 online databases held by London's public libraries, many of which can be used by library members from home or at work. This aggregates online and physical collections so they can be searched simultaneously.

The online databases include established information resources such as Encyclopaedia Britannica and the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. Others are less well known but include useful information for business (COBRA and Kompass) and learning and information (Credo reference and Grove Music online) as well as several online newspaper services (Daily Mirror Archive, Times Digital Archive, Newsbank and NewsUK).

The tag cloud was developed by Hove-based company Codeface, project managed by the LLDA and funded by MLA London.

Missing Constable sketch found in BL

A 'lost' early sketch by John Constable (1776 - 1837) and hundreds of original artworks and autographs by prominent 18th and 19th century artists have been discovered at the British Library. A 13-volume collection entitled *The Life of J.M.W. Turner, R.A.* features over 1,600 additions including portraits, views, autographs, engravings and original drawings including Turner correspondence and works by the artist's contemporaries, many previously unknown or considered 'lost'.



Hyam Church, Suffolk (John Constable)

Constable's 'lost' sketch is a pencil drawing of 'Hyam Church, Suffolk'. It was bought in 1896 from the sale of John Constable's grandson, Eustace Constable. The drawing is recorded as 'whereabouts unknown' in the catalogues of Constable's work.

Grants to support local skills needs

Over 30 museums, libraries and archives across London have been awarded grants to develop new learning activities for local people with Skills for Life needs. Skills for Life is the government's strategy to improve literacy, numeracy, language and ICT skills amongst adults.

In London, nearly 20% of adults lack functional literacy, and almost half have numeracy skills below Level 1 - the level for an average 11 year old.

The Skills for Life Innovation Fund was initiated by MLA London. It is funded by the London Development Agency, the European Social Fund and Renaissance London's Museum Development Fund.

The grants, of up to £5,000 per project, will enable museums, libraries and archives to develop new learning activities and devise new ways of using the collections to inspire and entertain, as well as to improve individual learners' skills. The learners will then be referred on for future support.

Kerouac celebration

On 17 September 2007, the British Library presented a tribute to American author Jack Kerouac, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the publication of his seminal novel *On the Road*.

'An Evening for Jack Kerouac', which was held in association with Penguin Books, comprised readings, music, film and conversation. Those taking part included Carolyn Cassady, wife of Kerouac's long-term associate and inspiration, Neal Cassady, and American composer and musician David Amram, who collaborated with Kerouac.



Jack Kerouac (Photo: Carolyn Cassady)

Open access - the view from a research funder



Robert Kiley

David Allen reports on the Sekforde Arms meeting of 10 July 2007

Robert Kiley, Head of E-strategy at the Wellcome Library, laid out the Wellcome

Trust's agenda on Open Access. This built very nicely on the issues raised by Ruth Rikowski in her presentation on global trade agreements and intellectual property rights on 13 February 2007 (see *London CLIP*, Issue 11, May 2007).

The Wellcome Trust (WT), which is the second largest medical charity in the world, invests some £500 million in medical research every year, the results of which are published in peer-reviewed biomedical journals. The increasing costs associated with scholarly journal publishing, and the high inflation rates of journal prices have restricted access both to the public and to the academic community, as have increasingly stringent applications of the law of intellectual property. WT found that even where researchers had access to well-funded library services between 10% and 20% of WT-funded research papers were inaccessible. Research by BioMed Central showed, for example, that while 90% of NHS-funded research is available online in full text, only 30% is immediately available to the public and only 40% available to NHS staff.

Unrestricted access to underlying data for combination and re-analysis between different research projects ('mashup' in Web 2.0-speak) is also of increasing importance as computer programs are developed to process the information and create new knowledge. One instance of this is the creation of a malaria atlas map from the various written reports on the prevalence of malaria mediated by the mapping of 'Google Earth'. Such developments – 'derivative works' – are often not possible under what have been standard copyright contracts of publication entered into by researchers.

In a cooperative scheme WT together with seven other funders of medical research set up UK PubMed Central (UKPMC) in January 2007. This aims to provide 'a stable, permanent and free-to-access online digital archive of full-text, peer-reviewed research publications and access to the underlying datasets'. The eight

organisations between them fund some 90% of biomedical research that is funded in the UK. UKPMC is based on, and mirrors, the content of PubMed Central (PMC) – the US National Institutes of Health (NIH) free digital archive of biomedical and life sciences journal literature, which was founded in February 2000.

The WT policy has been to write into grant agreements the obligation to deposit the research papers and the underlying data with UKPMC. This may be achieved either by publishing in a journal that has a policy to deposit papers (often for a fee) or else by the researcher archiving the final version of the report within six months. This would include any revisions that were made as a result of the peer review process undertaken as part of the commercial publication. The published article with all its apparatus of review and attribution remains the primary building block of knowledge creation.

There has been a movement in the research community away from the property-based marketing of intellectual rights towards a licensing framework. Art galleries, museums and image libraries are all taking this route. The financial implications where medical research is concerned obviously make this complete revision of the business model a scary one for major scientific publishers. Nevertheless some 59% of biomedical publishers have complied with WT requirements on open access, 15% are in active discussion and while only 10% are non-compliant 16% have no policy at present. This represents fairly fast development in the course of six months. There are some high profile non-compliant publishers, and they maintain their power by their prestige within the medical profession.

While it would be possible for WT to enter the field of journal publishing, the preferred route is to allow authors to continue to publish in the journal of their choice, and negotiate with the publishers to try to ensure that they offer a service that is fully compliant with the WT's open access grant conditions. The Trust recognises that there are costs associated with publishing – managing the peer review process, copy and language edits etc. – and has made additional funding available to cover these costs. Expressed simply, publications costs are just another research cost which the funder has to meet.

While there may be dissatisfaction with the way that capitalism organises and

exploits knowledge, it does not need a very long memory to recall the results, in tangible goods rather than knowledge and ideas, of the planned and command economies that were so popular in the 1960s. These were equally as susceptible to grotesque distortion of the supply of everyday necessities as the capitalist system. It really does seem that the safest route is that of a healthy tension between both systems of production.

The Wellcome Trust and its partners have emerged as major players in the promotion of open access to medical information and its re-use. Their strategy has included the establishment of UKPMC, and the introduction of contractual constraints on the disposition of Trust-funded research grants. The future for the freer exploitation of medical information and the creation of medical knowledge must be brighter for these developments.

Update on Update: the multiple roles of your professional journal



Elspeth Hyams

Stephen Cook reports on the Sekforde Arms meeting of 12 June 2007

A woman many may have seen scribbling away at events is Elspeth Hyams, Editor

of *Update*, CILIP's major publication for its members. With a background in publishing and PR as well as being an ex Deputy Director of the Booksellers Association, a former Director of the Institute of Information Scientists and Editor of the *Library Association Record* you could say she's well qualified for the job.

Elspeth explained that *Update* is the professional journal and hence should be a major attraction for advertisers, helping towards publication costs. The name change from the *Library Association Record* to *Update* marked a break with the past. The catalyst was the merger of the Library Association with the Institute of Information Scientists to create CILIP. *Update* gives the opportunity for discussion and debate about anything related to the profession. It aims to keep abreast of current trends and give an opportunity for in-depth analysis of major issues. In addition, there are regular features from regular columnists, and focused reporting, including interviews. There is a big difference from its forerunner *the LA Record* in that it's not so introspective.

CILIP's other major publication, the biweekly *Gazette*, mainly concentrates on career news, training, education and recruitment. In addition to CILIP information and announcements, branch news and products, it carries news about services and suppliers, and the much scrutinised news and events calendar.

The editorial policies for *Gazette* and *Update* are complementary and help cover all areas of the information profession.

Members are welcome to contribute and Elspeth advised she is always ready to listen to people with good ideas but some topics can be too specialist for *Update*. A narrative approach is sought and for all those library and information students out there Elspeth would particularly like to hear from you if you have something to say.

In the publishing profession we were advised that a new publication needs to be targeted at a specific audience. You have to know how to pitch it and what sort of readers you want to attract. Ask yourself what sort of messages you want to convey. The image you want to create is all-important. Elspeth explained that she has tried to create a 'practitioners' journal'.

It was suggested from the floor that sometimes *Update* can concentrate too much on public libraries and librarians, but Elspeth explained that this impression is caused because the public sector is fairly accessible whereas another area like the corporate sector is not so open and people need to be empowered to talk to the press. A bad word in the wrong direction could prove a public relations disaster.

Elspeth said she has a good team to work with including Laura Swaffield, Matthew Mezey and Christina Brockhurst. *Update* is published ten times a year and planning in advance consists of pegging out the major events of the year, which goes some way to structuring the year's focus on relevant issues. Elspeth advised it is important to have editorial independence and not just be a mouthpiece for Ridgmount Street.

One question from the audience concerned whether there was a resident photographer and surprisingly there is not – the journalists take their own pictures. Another view put forward from our gathering was that unlike previous radical publications *Update* steers clear of controversy and argument but Elspeth reiterated that

anyone who has a burning issue that they feel should be given an outlet should get in touch with her to see how the subject can be presented. Contact details are on the CILIP website.

Some members of the audience revealed that they read every word from cover to cover – information professionals most definitely!

Literacy at the crossroads



Robert Davidson

Monica Blake reports on the Sekforde Arms meeting of 11 September 2007

Robert Davidson, Managing Director of Sandstone Press, spoke of the importance of

literacy in a democratic society, and described the problems faced by people who are unable to read or write to any real degree of competence. While they may have ways to deal with day-to-day situations calling for literacy, their coping strategies often break down when something out of the ordinary comes along. Literacy affects everything from simple shopping expeditions to the democratic process. The lack of literacy skills is a key factor in social exclusion.

Statistics from the National Literacy Trust indicate that in England nearly 40% of adults cannot read or write properly or do simple sums. In Scotland around 23% may have low skills and a further 30% may find their skills inadequate.

People attempting to develop their literacy skills (often referred to as emergent readers) may be grouped into three broad fields:

- adults who have not properly learned to read and write
- older children not continuing in education
- those learning English from the base of another language.

Learning to read as an adult is particularly difficult. For people to read their first book, that book has to be right. Robert suggested 10,000-12,000 words make a good challenge. The book should be on the right kind of paper, with a large and widely spaced typeface. Most importantly, it must have page-turning qualities.

Sandstone Press introduced its Vista Series in 2003 following an approach

from Highland Adult Literacies and Highland Adult Basic Education. These books were developed for readers who are not used to reading full-length novels, or for those who want to enjoy a 'quick read' which is satisfying and well written.

The first three Sandstone Vista texts – by Des Dillon, Isla Dewar and Suhayl Saadi – were tested by sample groups of learners to determine the best paper colour, font, leading and layout.

Later testing was carried out in association with Essex County Council Libraries. Education packs were developed for literacy tutors, and Sandstone participated in various emergent reader events.

While some of these events, such as an author/reader workshop, were successful for all concerned, others were poorly attended. Often Sandstone's efforts to engage with emergent readers and their tutors have met with indifference. With the exception of Nairn, book festivals have expressed little interest.

On World Book Day 2007, Sandstone launched a new website with a 'hinterland' behind every book. For the Vistas, this amounts to an expanding manual on adult literacy. It is intended as a resource and reference point for tutors and learners (see www.sandstonepress.com/hinterland-vista.php and www.sandstonepress.com/hinterland-educationpack.php).

Throughout his talk, Robert referred to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which the British Government signed up to in 1948. He believes the government has failed in its literacy policy and that a coordinated national literacy project is required. It would need continuous commitment involving political energy and steady year-on-year funding.

Elements of a national literacy project would include a detailed survey to locate where and to what extent illiteracy exists, intensification of English teaching in schools, and more active seeking out of those emergent readers who wish to learn. Political champions would be needed to support the project. Robert recommends that libraries should act as a base for the learning programme, and that new libraries should be built, especially in areas of deprivation.

A full report of the talk is available at www.sandstonepress.com/hinterland-vista.php.

Skilled for Health

MLA London is piloting an innovative project in libraries to help adults improve both their health and skills. Working in partnership with the London Libraries Development Agency (LLDA) and the London Health Commission (LHC), MLA London is setting up Skilled for Health learning sessions in libraries in five different boroughs.

The sessions are designed for adults who would like to improve their health and well-being, while developing their literacy, language or numeracy skills at the same time. People with poor skills tend to be at a higher risk of suffering ill-health because of difficulties making informed choices about healthy lifestyles or navigating the healthcare system.

For example, those with limited language skills may not feel confident explaining their symptoms to the doctor or struggle to understand their medication. Poor understanding of a healthy diet and lifestyle tends to have a negative impact on the health of the family as a whole.

'The Skilled for Health sessions will be tailored to learners' health interests and skills needs', said Ann Wolfe, leading the project for MLA London. 'We are also planning to run sessions for refugees who might like to learn, for example, how to register with a GP or why physical activity can be beneficial to their health. The sessions will be fun and informal as well as helping people improve their English or literacy skills at the same time.'

MLA London is working in collaboration with community groups, library staff, health promotion experts and Skills for Life teachers. The aim is to reach a cross-section of learners from disadvantaged communities.

Skilled for Health in libraries is being piloted initially for 12 months in five boroughs – Islington, Ealing, Tower Hamlets, Newham and Barking and Dagenham – with a view to assessing the potential for further rollout in the future.

Gardening award for library

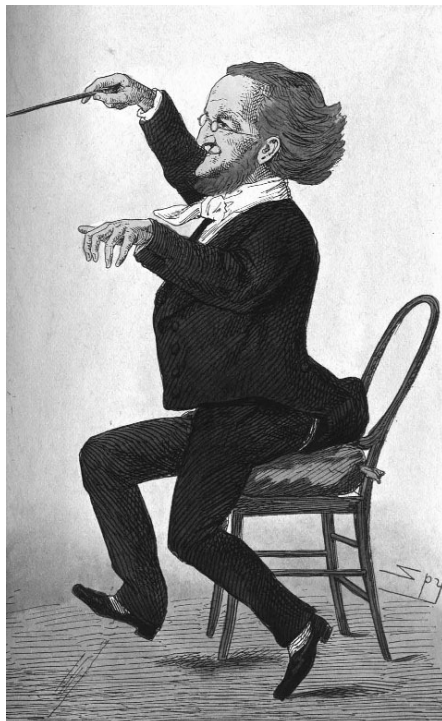
Homerton Library won first prize for Best Business Premises in the 2007 Hackney in Bloom competition. Library users and staff worked together on a planting scheme to bring colour to the space around the library.

Wagner in London

Wagner in London is a small exhibition paying homage to the composer Richard Wagner. On display in the British Library's Sir John Ritblat Gallery, it coincides with performances of Wagner's Ring Cycle (Der Ring des Nibelungen) at the Royal Opera House.

The exhibition draws on the British Library's collections of manuscripts, playbills, programmes, sound recordings, newspapers, theatre designs and correspondence. It illustrates the Wagner performing tradition in London, from the composer's own visits in 1855 and 1877 to the first Covent Garden performance of the Ring Cycle, conducted by Gustav Mahler, in 1892.

Wagner in London is on display until 6 January 2008.



The Music of the Future (Vanity Fair, 19 May 1877)

FUTURE EVENTS 2007/2008

EVENING MEETINGS

These meetings are held in The Sekforde Arms, Sekforde Street, London EC1, 6.30pm. Contact Phillip Powell
Phillip@montanaroad.plus.com

13 November,
From Beleek to Lowestoft - a journey through the UK's libraries
OR Long Overdue, Tom Palmer

8 January,
Using librarians' skills sets for knowledge management, Helen Nicol

OTHER EVENTS

13 November,
RFID in Libraries Conference, QEII Conference Centre, London. Contact conferences@cilip.org.uk

3 December,
Information Professionals' Christmas Party 2007, One Whitehall Place, London. Contact admin@cityinformation.org.uk

4-6 December,
Online Information 2007, Olympia Grand Hall, London. Contact www.online-information.co.uk

4-6 December,
Information Management Solutions 2007, Olympia Grand Hall, London. Contact www.ims-show.co.uk

5 December,
Building For Excellence, New Eltham Library. Contact michael.clarke@llda.org.uk

29 January,
Building For Excellence, Islington Central Library. Contact michael.clarke@llda.org.uk

Mid-March,
Building For Excellence, Wanstead Library. Contact michael.clarke@llda.org.uk

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