



NEWS



March/April 2008 - Issue 6

The Virtual Librarian – A Virtual Reality Improbability? Is this a way forward for today’s Information Professional?

Alison Thorne
Information Manager
SMMT Ltd

The image of librarians and information professionals has always been a bone of contention within and outside of the profession. The stereotypical image of a female librarian, with hair tied up in a bun and wearing tweed we know couldn’t however be further from the truth. Unfortunately, the persistent portrayal of this image as the norm will always prompt discussion. So it not surprising then that some information professionals have found some very inventive ways in which to present themselves and the profession to their public.

Images of librarians span from reality to virtual reality to just plain weird. The Library Avenger in his blog berates the lack of ‘worship’ librarians receive, and suggests that *“Librarians can catalog anything from an onion to a dog’s ear. They could catalog you.....Librarians wield unfathomable power.”* (<http://librarianavengers.org/worship-2/>)

We may not want obtain such notoriety as the Library Avenger would have us to aspire too, but how about being a toy moulded in plastic like Nancy Pearl, a librarian from Seattle, USA. Nancy’ (resplendent in red) if you push the button on her back moves her arm with an “amazing ‘shushing’ action!” Please note - this is the deluxe version!!



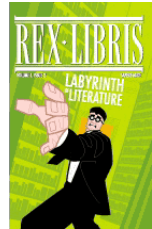
<http://www.mcphoe.com/>



Female and male imagery in comics tend to be somewhat exaggerated with biceps and triceps bulging to eye boggling extremes. However, the realistic looking Katina Choovanski from the comic series *Strangers in Paradise*, seen here in the ‘Look it up!’ graphic, is an

image favoured by information professionals everywhere - and definitely one image many of us can identify with.

So that the men among us don’t feel left out, you have a hero in the form of Rex Libris. Rex is the Head Librarian at Middleton Public Library, where he is a guardian of knowledge and a member of the Ordo Bibliotheca, a secret international order of librarians. He travels across the galaxy in search of overdue books, confronting powerful alien warlords who refuse to pay their late fees. His ‘superficial docility’ is but a mask behind which lurks a kick-ass librarian!



Blogs, toys, comics are all different media that information professions can use to spread the ‘Word’, but what if you could take it a step further - What if reality and virtual reality could be combined? What if you were able to present yourself to your clients in a form that was ‘different’ but at the same time you? What if you had the ability to move between worlds and reach the physically impossible. Interested? Then take a look at the 3D online virtual world of the Avatar - “a digital representation of a person in a digital environment.”

With the proliferation of Web 2.0 applications the creative possibilities for the intrepid information professional are now endless! In creating your avatar not only can you change how you look. You can make yourself accessible to clients whenever, however and wherever you choose, adding a new dimension to your service and at the same time tapping into new sources of information, creating new professional networks and expanding your knowledge base.



The use of avatars is not restricted to just virtual worlds. They can be used in different electronic mediums. The Umeaa County Library in Sweden has a virtual librarian. He’s not animated but he does has a friendly welcoming ‘persona’.

<http://www.umearegionen.se/samverkanumearegionen/bibliotek/sokaochlana.4.d2f5f1101a6b3e70c800022607.html>

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People

Committee Changes Again!

I tell you it's all go (quite literally) on the CLSIG committee.

The main elected officer roles were reviewed just before the AGM, and a few members have taken the opportunity to try something a little different.

Kim Mclachlan has relinquish her role as Secretary, and the reins are to be taken up by the very able **Jennifer Smith**. Kim, has been an invaluable member of the committee, her cool level headedness has kept us all on track. However, when she leaves the committee she will be taking on the role of the deputy policy forum member for CLSIG.

Anyone fancy taking on the role of Chair? **Oriole Newgass** is contemplating hanging up the boxing gloves next year. For her sins she has already leaped (with great delight?!) into a new role on the CILIP Policy Forum. So if you would be interested in the Chair position - or know of someone who would relish the idea please contact Jennifer Smith.

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CLSIG
Commercial, Legal & Scientific Information Group

work commitments are **Mary Lovell** and **Sarbjit Dhillon**.



After our AGM, **Joanna Hudson** expressed an interest in becoming a committee member. Joanna is Information Services Officer at Hammonds LLP, a law firm in central London. Before her MA in Library and Information Studies she worked in legal and academic libraries. She completed her MA from University College London in October 2007. When not working Joanna enjoys renovating her new flat, yoga and getting stuck (she can't be that good at yoga?) into a really good book.

Jacky Berry will also be joining the committee. Jacky has recently been made the permanent Librarian at the BMA. She has been an information professional for over 30 years and her experience ranges from being a school librarian in her early career days, to working in the Inner London Education Authority to being Head of Information Services at Linklaters, a global Law firm. She also has experience of working in the property sector and with a firm of actuaries. She spent 2 years working at TFPL as their Training Manager before taking on a Project Manager role at the BMA. The role has involved the relocation of the Library, analysing services for members and making changes accordingly, restructuring the department and installing a new Library Management system.



Claire Taylor's 3 years as Webmaster are up, she is bowing out and handing the position over to **David Griffiths (ADLG)**. Also leaving the committee due to

Rolling Stack

We are moving our Library collection and have available a system of compact shelving, installed in 2004, in excellent condition.

It comprises 60 bays of static and rolling shelving of Railex System 1000. The total capacity is 420 linear metres. Each bay 2170mm high, 1000mm wide, 400mm deep.

There is a single, fixed run at each side and a double sided, fixed run in the centre. Each half contains two double sided runs which move on rails on the floor. Each run has five bays of 1 metre wide with six or seven shelves each 40cm deep. Adjustable spacing at 25mm intervals. There are 365 Duo shelves in all, which can be used for (lateral 330) hanging files or as book shelves. The total size is 6530mm wide, 5045mm deep, 2170mm tall plus track about 30mm. Please call for more details.

Yvonne Abel, The Concrete Society
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(Continued from page 1)

There are many virtual worlds out there, all catering for different audiences/needs.

One of the most widely known of these 3D online virtual worlds is Second Life (SL) a world built and owned by its residents (<http://secondlife.com/>). Information professionals are catered for within SL notably in the SL Library 2.0, which currently has over 1400 members (<http://infoisland.org>). Members can attend meetings, network, give/receive training or just meet up for a chat.

Just because it is based within a virtual world doesn't mean that it's all play. Valid university status training is available. This was an advert from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA advertising courses in the SL Library 'Infoisland Blog': <http://infoisland.org/2007/07/18/new-virtual-world-librarianship-coursesuiuc-and-alliance-library-system/>

New Virtual World Librarianship courses/UIUC and Alliance Library System

Virtual World Librarianship Courses
Avatars! Linden Dollars! Librarianship!

Librarianship? What ARE they talking about?
To discover how avatars, Linden dollars, and librarianship relate to one another, come join us in continuing education courses on librarianship in the virtual world of Second Life.

It's not just academic activities take place within the SL Library, other activities available include poetry reading, music events, literary festivals, book discussions and staff meetings:



SL caters for a variety of interests and age groups, and the subject coverage of libraries is testament to this:

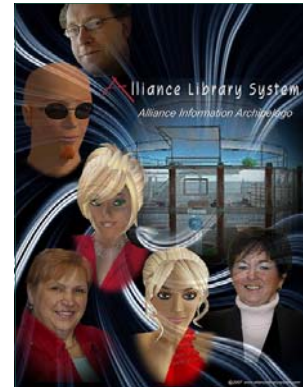
- Info Islands 1 and 2 has:
 - Genealogy Research Centre
 - Library Gallery
 - Mystery Manor
 - Performance Centre
 - Science Centre
 - SF/Fantasy Centre
- Health Info Island
- SL Consumer Health Library



- The Caledon Branch Library
- Cybrary City Islands - a virtual home to many public and academic RL libraries.
- Eye4YouAlliance on Teen SL

In October 2007 the **Internet Librarian International 2007: New Realities, Roles and Resources** conference had a number of very interesting sessions, one of which was entitled 'Virtual Libraries' by Kitty Pope, Barbara Galik and Guus van den Brekel. During this session we were introduced to their avatars (who interestingly, as you can see in the poster below bear little resemblance to their creators - a familiar trait in SL).

Kitty Pope is the Executive Director of the Alliance Library System. In her presentation she showed that Libraries and IPs are vital in the development of virtual worlds, as they bring with them the professional ability to help users network, communicate and learn.



She also showed that virtual worlds - particularly within the academic area can be used as:

- A communication tool.
- A continuing education and distance education tool.
- A tool to extend information services 24/7.
- A tool to promote community dialogue.

See her presentation for more details:

http://www.internet-librarian.com/2007Presentations/A104_Pope.pps

(Guus van den Brekel's presentation:

http://www.internet-librarian.com/2007Presentations/A104_vandenBrekel.pps#442.1,Slide 1)

Although Barbara Galik's avatar wasn't that cooperative during the live link presentation. What I did see of SL was interesting enough to make me consider getting my own avatar. Whether this decision would further my professional development is questionable, but I think I'll have a lot of fun trying to find out.

Will the use of avatars within a commercial or legal setting become the norm? Could you trust someone's credibility if all you saw of them was an avatar? They have after all been used positively in training, discussions, and information exchange, who knows they could bring a broad-minded IP into contact with a new type of service user. So maybe such a virtual venture is not so improbable after all.

Please send in your comments. Are CLSIG members interested in the use of, or are already using avatars and virtual worlds in the workplace?



[HTTP://WWW.SLURL.COM/AVATARS.TYHOO.COM](http://www.slurl.com/avatars/tyhoo.com)

Starburst Kawanishi (Alison Thorne)

CLSIG - Survey of members at the AGM, January 2008

At the AGM everyone present was asked to complete a written survey of what they would like from CLSIG during 2008. Out of 25 attendees we received 17 responses. Below are the results:

- The first question asked what activities the group should be focusing on. We had a very mixed response with pretty much an even spread amongst all the activities listed.
- There's strong interest in visits to the National Archives, the Royal Courts of Justice and the City Business Library.
- There's good interest in a trip to Vinopolis, and also for the overview of library careers in different sectors.
- New technologies and future trends are hot topics for events.

1. What's most important to you? With 1 as most important

	1	2	3	4	Total
To be kept informed of professional issues	6	6	3	2	17
Networking opportunities	6	6	1	3	16
Personal & professional development events	9	0	4	3	16
Professional visits	2	3	5	4	14

2. Where would you like us to arrange a visit?

National Archives	11	Companies House, Cardiff	4
Royal Courts of Justice	9	Beaulieu Motor Museum, New Forest	4
City Business Library	8	National Trust / English Heritage	4
Stately Home / Palace Library	7	BL Doc Delivery, Boston Spa	4
Guardian Archive	7	Bodleian Library, Oxford	3
Collingdale Newspaper Library	5	Kew Gardens	3
Shakespeare's Globe	4		

One respondent requested we organise visits outside of working hours

3. What networking events would you like arranged?

Vinopolis	10
Overview of careers in different LIS sectors	6

One respondent said they preferred networking events with an educational part

4. What professional events would you like arranged?

New technologies	15	Effective communication	6
Future trends	12	Presentation skills	2
Searching the hidden web	11		

Further suggestions:

Budgeting; Information audits; Negotiating; Copyright
 Social networking - comparison of sites & case studies of use in ILS
 Informal visits to members libraries

The committee will now be incorporating your suggestions, starting this year although not at the top of the list, with a visit to the Guardian Archive.

All the completed forms were entered into a draw, and the winner of the bottle of bubbly was Jill Halford former Chair of CLSIG (or rather ICLG).

Sponsors: - 7Side - SWETS
 - Sue Hill - Macfarlanes

Jennifer Smith

CLSIG AGM

On Tuesday 29th January 2008 @ 6.30pm, the faithful were gathered at Macfarlanes in Norwich Street for the CLSIG AGM Extraordinaire, and what an extraordinary night it turned out to be.

The room was buzzing with anticipation as Oriole Newgass the Chair stepped up to the podium. For a number of reasons she explained the committee did not have a financial report to present to the members:

- We have had a recent change in Treasurer.
- We are in the process of changing banks and recording our new name.
- The AGM had come so early, there hadn't been time to produce one.

Oriole, rather than handing out a written annual report, presented an oral one:

Major changes:

- Name change.
- ADLG independence from CLSIG.
 - David Griffiths acknowledged the help from CLSIG in this endeavour.
 - Loss of 'ADLG' capitation noted.

Newsletter:

- E-Newsletter is being investigated.
- One hardcopy annual review, is being investigated, with costs covered by sponsorship.
 - Chair acknowledged the work of the Newsletter Editor - content & timeliness.

Events:

- Umbrella.
 - Victoria Jannetta, was the best attended session.
 - CLSIG is no longer going to attend. Umbrella is not cost effective and is too public library orientated.
- Cardiff Tour - will be repeated in 2008 as it was so popular.
- AUKML/CLSIG Open Day - very well attended.
- ADLG events.
 - Guildhall Tour & Survival of Libraries.
- Online 2008.
 - Gazette reviewed Orioles session.

Future Events:

- Bloomsbury Conference 30th March - 1st April.
- ADLG Business Library Trip & AGM.
- CLSIG will not be attending LiS, but will be supporting through advertisements in the newsletter.
- Olympia - Law London.
 - Supporting BIALL & CLSIG stand.
- Online 2009.

Committee changes:

- Jennifer Smith takes over the Secretary role from Kim Mclachlan.
- Katherine Ross takes over the Treasurer role from Darren Middleton.
- Oriole will be the CLSIG representative on the Policy Forum.
- Kim Mclachlan will be the alternate CLSIG representative on the Policy Forum.

The guest speaker for the evening was Sheila Webber and she spoke on *Second Life and Its Uses*. Sheila is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Information Studies at Sheffield University.

She presented a detailed and fascinating overview of the virtual world of Second Life or SL, and how it is currently being used in the information world.



Together with a live demonstration (once the connection had decided to work) Sheila took us through her 3-D virtual world.

We saw meeting places where discussions were held between 'virtual' staff and students. We visited her homes and her shop where she sold her 'real world' photographs and 'virtual' t-shirts sporting her own designs.

Fortunately for us, another information professional came online while 'Sheila' was showing us around her shop. Her fellow SL member was dressed to party - in her clubbing outfit. It was good to see an IP letting her hair down - even if it was in a virtual world.



SL Library

Second Life is a growing worldwide phenomenon, which had gained international media attention in 2007. While Second Life is sometimes referred to as a game, this description does not fit the standard definition, as the 3-D virtual world is entirely created by its residents. Second Life has attracted the attention of big businesses and educational facilities which have all found benefits and uses in this virtual universe.

The evening went well, it would be fair to say that all who attended had a relaxed, memorable and enjoyable time.

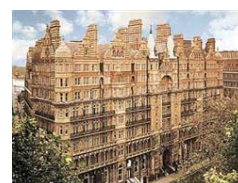
Our thanks to our sponsors: 7Side, SWETS, Sue Hill and Macfarlanes.

Alison Thorne



The Bloomsbury Conference Beyond Discovery

30 March 2008 - 1 April 2008



Day 1

The Hotel Russell was the impressive setting for the first day of the joint EUSIDIC & CLSIG conference in March. Jackie Marfleet's talk was a wake up call to any information professionals still thinking of web 2.0 as a passing fad. Social networking, she argued, is a paradigm shift affecting everyone from libraries to throughout our whole communities. Her talk focused on Enterprise 2.0: social software used in a business context, and drew from her experience of piloting social software tools at accountancy giant, Ernst and Young.



(Courtesy of Marydee Ojala)

Other presentations included: 'The Goo' - a shared online to-do list which aims to filter your to-do list to show you appropriate tasks to do be done at any time, by Nigel Hamilton, CEO of Trexy. Rafael Ball, Chemistry Library at Julich gave a demonstration of the search tool and portal for chemistry information they had developed in collaboration with academic staff. Jens Vigen, Information Services, CERN, gave an engaging and informative talk on the initiative within high-energy physics to create a single database of community-created articles and information. He encouraged information professionals to look beyond their immediate geographically-based user group, and seek to support subject fields on a global scale.

The afternoon speakers (Marvin Pollard, California State University (USA), Bas Savenije, University Library of Utrecht (NL), James Pringle, Thomson Philadelphia, Pa. (USA), Dirk Lewandowski, HAW Hamburg (D), Thomas Snyder, Swets Information Services (NL)), presented further examples of information professionals and information vendors working with innovative IT solutions to provide a faster, more satisfying information seeking experience for users.

Jennifer Smith

(Jennifer's full 1st day report is available on the CLSIG website)

Day 2

The conference proceedings moved to the Park Inn Hotel, also in Russell Square. Derek Law as always got the day off to a cracking start, his presentation had us glued to the screen - particularly after seeing the title "*It sure ain't Kansas, Toto: Library futures as Straw Men or Lions?*". With Derek's presentation setting the tone the day just got better and better.

Gwenda Sippings; Veronica Kennard; and Jacky Berry, presented their personal take on the topic: *When everything is on the desktop: thriving on change in UK commercial & special libraries.*

Gwenda Sippings without the assistance of her presentation was able to impart some valuable advice, as did the other speakers, Veronica Kennard who spoke on managing change at NM Rothschild, followed by Jacky Berry who spoke about her former consultancy role in the BMA Library, subsequent employment and orchestration of the library move.



Mary Lovell's (7Side (UK)) workshop: *Visions of success: how a new foundation can turn around a culture*, had us merrily interacting with our fellow conferences and using word-searches and poster making to get the brain juices flowing.



Tim Buckley Owen rounded of the day with a Q&A session with a panel of conference speakers: Gwenda Sippings, Jackie Marfleet, Mary Lovell and Derek Law in *Survival stakes: hope or despair?* An enjoyable ending to a fine conference.



The majority of the conference presentations are available on the CLSIG website: <http://www.clsig.org.uk> and on the EUSIDIC website: <http://www.eusidic.net/index.php?content=presentations>



CLSIG Summer Event

You are invited to an evening of indulgence at

Vinopolis

No. 1 Bank End, London, SE1 9BU

Thursday 10th July, from 6pm



Time to get out your party frocks and glad rags. We'll be celebrating the summer, whatever the weather, with an evening of taste tantalisation at Vinopolis.

You'll be entertained in a private room by an expert wine guide
Receive a light-hearted lesson in wine-tasting
and enjoy six different wines from around the world

Come and perfect your smelling, swirling & slurping techniques
take part in the Blind Wine Challenge
with a chance to win a bottle of R de Ruinart Champagne.

When: Thursday 10th July, from 6pm

Where: Vinopolis, 1 Bank End, London, SE1 9BU, London

Cost: £20 for CLSIG members, £25 for non-members.

To reserve your ticket please email Jo at events@clsig.org.uk
with your name and membership status.



This event has been kindly sponsored
by Swets, TFPL

the
SOLICITORS
group

**LAW LONDON
2008
LONDON**

The SOLICITORS group Law Librarians Conference took place within Law London 2008 at Olympia 2, London on 12th March 2008 to which CLSIG members were able to attend for free

For full details of this conference, as well as other conferences being held by the Solicitors group please visit their website:

www.thesolicitorsgroup.co.uk

If you would like to book to attend any of The SOLICITORS group conferences, tel: 01332 226601.

The **HOLLYWOOD** Librarian
The Film

Well I never, the profession has cracked it in the USA. Hold on to your book stamps we're in Hollywood!

If you don't know what all the fuss is about have a close look at the trailer on YouTube:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A8kd4fC1bwo>.

It's great to see Librarians talking about the profession in a professional way and exciting way.

To find out if it will be showing near you, go to the films website for more details:
<http://www.hollywoodlibrarian.com/>

Contacts & Notices

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Hip Hip Hurray

CLSIG has a new shortcut URL. You can now find us within the CILIP website at:

<http://www.cilip.org.uk/clsig>

<http://www.clsig.org.uk>



CILIP, 7 Ridgmount Street, London WC1E 7AE
9th October 2008, 9.30-16.30

The objective of this workshop is to set out the key elements of an intranet governance strategy. The workshop will cover:

- Making a business case for an intranet
- Developing an intranet strategy
- Turning a strategy into an operational plan
- Creating and managing the intranet team
- Supporting the work of content authors
- Achieving intranet impact
- Developing and undertaking usability tests
- Gaining user feedback

As well as copies of the presentations delegates will be provided with a template for an intranet governance strategy. The workshop will include some group work and good opportunities to share ideas and experiences. See UKeiG website for more details: <http://www.ukeig.org.uk/training/2008/October/IntranetGovernance.html>



The CiG Open Day
St Bride Institute
Bride Lane, Fleet Street
EC4Y 8EQ

Wednesday 25th June 2008

1.00 pm - 5.00 pm - sessions
5.00 pm - 7.00 pm - wine tasting

This is a FREE event about CiG and the industry.

Join CiG for a line up of exciting seminars, whether you are settled in your career and would like to share your experience and wisdom with the next generation, or if you would like to know more about what information professionals do and how you can contribute to CiG. Afterwards join CiG at The Press House Wine Bar for complimentary drinks and wine tasting!

Afternoon sessions include:

- Speed networking
- Dragons (CiG) Den
- The CiG Apprentice
- Talks from Employers and recruiters
- Wine tasting from 5pm at The Press House Wine Bar

For more details and session times:
<http://www.cityinformation.org.uk>

To register: Email admin@cityinformation.org.uk
(For group bookings download form from website)

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