



## **Annual Report 2010/2011**

**For presentation to 2011 AGM  
To be held on 8 November 2011  
At CILIP HQ**

The last annual report covered the period to the end of March 2010, with mention of some later events. This report therefore officially covers the period April 2010 to March 2011, though as the AGM is being held in November 2011 activities during the summer of 2011 will also be included.

### **Committee changes**

Committee membership has remained stable over 2010-11. Our Secretary, Miriam Walters, went on maternity leave after the spring meeting. We are grateful to her predecessor, Rob Westwood, who has remained on the committee, for resuming the secretarial role temporarily during her absence.

### **Membership**

Membership stands at 560 as of October 2011, plus a small number of non-CILIP members, recruited as a result of our annual conference. There has been no concerted drive to attract members from outside the library and information profession in the past year, largely due to uncertainty regarding the future structure of CILIP groups and CILIP recruitment policy.

### **Publicity**

#### ***Website***

We have experienced continuing issues regarding the updating of the website, with limitations on the structure and content. Following discussions with CILIP staff, who have confirmed that some desired enhancements cannot be accommodated on the CILIP server, the committee is now actively considering reestablishing an independent website which will offer greater functionality and flexibility.

#### ***Mailings***

The number of members receiving the monthly e-bulletin distributed by CILIP currently stands at 267, just 5 more individuals than in October 2010. Take-up of the service appears to have stabilised at slightly under half the members of the Group.

We have regular mailings of events via LIS LIB-HIST and SHARP-L and also via the Facebook group. There are currently 346 members of LIS-LIBHIST, which continues to show a steady increase year on year. The site is fully archived, has discussions going back to 1998 and forms a strong research resource.

Our Publicity Officer has produced bookmarks for distribution at relevant events giving details of our website address and other useful contacts. A yearcard went out to all members in the annual mailing, together with a hard copy issue of the newsletter (see below).

## **Newsletter**

Three issues of the newsletter were produced on schedule in 2010-11. Our editor Renae Satterley is to be congratulated on consistently producing such high quality attractive content. Issues are made available on our website and distributed by post to those members who have requested hard copy. Following feedback from members, one issue of the newsletter each year is sent out to all members in hard copy together with the yearcard annual mailing. The online newsletter is now available both in full colour A4 and in an A5 format suitable for printing. We are currently in discussion with CILIP to see if a mechanism can be established for emailing the newsletter in PDF format directly to those members who wish to receive it by email.

## **Library & Information History**

Our journal *Library & Information History* (formerly *Library history*) continues to flourish under the editorship of Toni Weller, with four issues appearing each year. Supplementing Karen Attar's work as book reviews editor, as of 2011 a regular bibliography of new books in the field is being compiled with the assistance of Katie Birkwood and Caroline Nappo.

Earlier this year, the Group received a proposal from our publishers Maney for a buy-out of the journal. The committee considered all aspects of this offer very carefully, and after discussion with CILIP's CEO, Annie Mauger, decided that it should be rejected. A one-off payment could not be retained by the Group under CILIP reserves policy, and the maintenance of an ongoing regular source of income in royalties from the journal is very much in the long-term interests of the Group.

## **Awards**

### ***Library History Essay prize 2010:***

The Library history essay prize, sponsored by Emerald, is awarded to the best article or essay published in the preceding year. We are delighted to report that eight essays, which were of a very high standard, were considered for the award. After serious deliberation, the judges decided that the award should go to Markman Ellis for 'Coffee-house libraries in mid-eighteenth-century London', in *The Library*, 7th series, 10.1 (2009), pp.3-40. Mark Towsey's 'First steps in associated reading: book use and sociability at the Wigtown Subscription library, 1795-9', *The Bibliographical Society of America*, 103 (Dec. 2009), pp. 455-95, was highly recommended by the panel.

### ***Ollé Award for 2010:***

The Ollé Award is an annual studentship up to a total annual sum of £500, open to undergraduates or postgraduates in any discipline working on library history. Despite a reworking of the criteria for the award and determined advertising, once again no applications were received. Two student

bursaries for attendance at the LIHG's annual conference were awarded, and both recipients produced reports on the conference for the Newsletter.

## Events

**Wolfenbüttel.** The Anglo-German Conference at Wolfenbüttel took place in September 2010, with contributions from Scandinavia, Germany and the UK. The theme of the conference was *Volksbildung durch Lesestoffe* or "Popular education through reading materials", in the period up to 1850 and concentrating on the concept of *Volksaufklärung* or "Popular Enlightenment". Three UK speakers attended on behalf of the LIHG, with a fourth paper read in absentia. All four papers will appear in the published proceedings of the conference.

**LIHG Annual Conference.** This took place in May 2011. This year's conference was on the theme of *Libraries under threat* and was held at UCL. The event attracted 25 attendees, a drop in numbers from the previous year, but a reflection of the economic climate and the difficulty of justifying time away from the workplace. We were delighted to welcome eight highly entertaining and diverse speakers, including three overseas speakers: from the USA, Australia, and the Czech Republic.

**History of Libraries Research Seminar.** The Group once again supported this highly successful and well attended seminar series organised by the Institute of English Studies and the School of Advanced Study at the University of London.

**Libraries Walking Tour.** We are grateful to Renae Satterley for organising the Group's first walking tour of London taking in a selection of historically significant libraries. The event was fully booked and the format may be repeated in other locations.

**CILIP Umbrella 2011.** The Group contributed just one paper to this year's Umbrella, it proving difficult to fit library history into the six strands available, all focussed somewhat narrowly on professional skills. Kathryn McKee and Ryan Cronin from St John's College Library in Cambridge gave a presentation on educational outreach in an historic library. The session was well-attended, and has given rise to positive feedback.

## Meetings Report 2010-2011

Three committee meetings were held in 2010-11: in June 2010 in Edinburgh, November 2010 at CILIP HQ (which was also the AGM) and in March 2011 in Bristol.

A members' event following the formal AGM proved popular, attracting Group members, librarians from outside the Group, and history researchers with no association with CILIP. A panel of invited speakers considered questions on the usefulness of library history, its place in professional development, its future direction, and even tackled posers from the floor such as 'What is a library?'. Lively discussion ensued and continued through tea.

## Future direction of the Group

This has been a challenging year for all Groups. Towards the end of 2010, CILIP announced the closure of its Membership Support Unit, those staff who had supported the work of Groups being made redundant. This was followed by the unwelcome news that capitation for Groups was to be suspended altogether for 2011. In February 2011, a meeting of Group and Branch representatives at

Ridgmount Street was told that the current number of special interest groups was unsustainable and that radical organisational change was needed. Groups were encouraged to find new ways of working and to seek mergers where feasible to reduce the administrative burden. The LIHG committee discussed various options for the future of the Group, and approached several other special interest groups to explore options for closer collaboration, though it rapidly became clear that our priorities and objectives did not accord sufficiently with other groups for any merger to be a practical proposition. A subset of the LIHG committee met with Annie Mauger (CEO) and Francis Muzzu (Head of Customer Services) at CILIP in August 2011, and had a positive discussion about the future of the Group, where we were reassured that groups such as the LIHG who had a clearly defined area of special interest, delivered a quality member service, and whose activities accorded with CILIP objectives, would continue to be supported as individual groups within CILIP. Our fortunate position in having a regular external source of income from journal royalties to support group activities was regarded as a model which other groups could follow. We have also been assured that we can continue to recruit members from outside CILIP. While the prospects for the future of the Group seem very much more positive than they did six months ago, the level of funding which will be allocated to special interest groups for 2012 has - at time of writing - not yet been announced.

**Kathryn McKee**  
**LIHG Chair**