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Tel. 01 251 2551

Tel. 0324 21591

# Local and Regional Bibliographies: a state of the art report

Among the recommendations of the report on the 'Investigation of local publications' sponsored by the British Library, Research and Development Department not long ago, was that "A system of bibliographies, preferably regional bibliographies, needs to be encouraged". As joint author of that report, the present state of local and regional bibliography is of particular interest to me. The report was particularly concerned with the problem of current bibliography, but it is in restrospective bibliography that there is most to show. Fine published bibliographies, such as those for Kent, and Norfolk², are there to be seen; a massive scheme to cope with the emormous problems of Lancashire bibliography has been under way for many years³; and other areas, such as Lincolnshire and Staffordshire, have fresh schemes in immediate prospect. There is also at least one current county bibliography, the Sussex Bibliography.

As regards regional bibliographies, three are published, in East Anglia, the East Midlands and North East England. Unfortunately there have been losses, such as the lamented *Black Country Bibliography* which now only survives as some sheaf binders preserved in the Birmingham Local Studies Library. But there are also bibliographic efforts in Scotland (*Bibliography of Scotland*<sup>7</sup>) and Northern Ireland (*Northern Ireland Local Studies*<sup>8</sup>) which perform the same function, and which should more correctly ne referred to as national bibliographies. However the most exciting current initiatives are at York University Library, and these present the possibility of a central focus for local and regional bibliography even more ambitious than that recommended in the British Library Report.

To deal with existing bibliographies first: the regional bibliography is very much a co-operative enterprise. The East Anglian Bibliography and East Midlands Bibliography are published by the regional Branches of the Library Association, and Northern Bibliography is published by the Northern Regional Library System. In each case the bibliography is attached to an organisation with a call on the loyalty of the library systems of the region. This is an essential starting point if the coverage is to be good. All three then rely on the libraries to supply information about their acquisitions to the editor on a regular basis. In East Anglia, the editor Michael Lister sends out a form letter at approximately three month intervals to remind contributors that entries are needed. The response to all three bibliographies varies greatly in quantity and quality between different contributors. Cataloguing variations are a major problem and necessitate the reediting of much of the information. In East Anglia, contributors are being

encouraged to conform to something like AACR2, but even that is not easy as several of the contributors are Record Offices, which are not so used to library cataloguing standards. Margaret Thompson of Northern Bibliography has a small standard form which she can send to contributors to request an annotation when, as is often the case, the local element in a publication is not obvious in the title. Only Tony O'Neal, the previous editor of East Midlands Bibliography, had rather less problem with this, since he did contribute a good proportion of the entries himself, direct from the publications.

Once the bibliographic information is collected and edited into as near a standard form as is possible, the production of the published bibliography is the next concern. All of the bibliographies adopt an informal method of production, for obvious reasons of speed and economy. East Anglian Bibliography for instance, is duplicated and Northern Bibliography uses photo reproduction. There is a certain amount of difference between what appears on the page in each bibliography. This does not just mean that the bibliographic entries differ (the entries in East Anglian Bibliography being very full and informative for instance) but that the arrangements also differ. Northern Bibliography, which began with material in a single author sequence, now has a simple and straightforward subject system backed up by an annual index. East Anglian Bibliography and East Midlands Bibliography have an arrangement which is basically topographical.

The finished product, published quarterly in each case, sells for an extremely reasonable price somewhere between £5 and £10 per annum. In no case does this represent a true cost for the bibliography. The expense most consistently ignored in pricing is, of course, the time and effort of the editor. At these prices, each of the bibliographies has about 100 subscribers. They consist of the local public libraries, each of which takes a number of copies, libraries in education, and a miscellaneous scatter of other interested libraries, including some in other parts of the country and overseas. Although each of the bibliographies is viable at the current level of subscription, and indeed may provide a nominal but valued profit to its sponsors, all the editors are concerned to increase the number of subscriptions. Standard letters to potential new subscribers are occasionally tried, but the effect is only sufficient to preserve current numbers rather than producing a great increase.

Alongside their concern to have their bibliographies more widely distributed and producing more income, the editors are also interested in improving the quality of what they produce. Margaret Thompson is very seriously examining the possibilities of producing *Northern Bibliography* on a microcomputer. The editing, printing, and possibly indexing would all be much more efficient if mechanised. The emphasis at *East Anglian Biblio-*

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# Editorial matters; Advertising; Distribution:

Ian Jamieson, FLA, Senior Lecturer, School of Librarianship, Lipman Building, Newcastle Polytechnic, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8ST.

Subscriptions and remittances: Bernard Nurse, BA, ALA, Hon. Treasurer, LSG, Southwark Local Studies Library, 211 Borough High Street, London SE1. Cheques to be made payable to the Library Association, Local Studies Group.

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Cover illustration: A view of Birmingham c. 1886. Courtesy of the Local Studies Department, Birmingham Reference Library.

## Editorial

One of the most important aspects of local studies librarianship is the acquisition and recording of locally produced publications, and this issue carries a number of items concerned with local and regional bibliography. The recording of locally published material has always been a problem. The British National Bibliography is notably unhelpful for various reasons — much of this type of material does not fall within its scope, much relevant material is not deposited, the BNB itself is selective to some extent. and there is also the question of late listing. The answer has therefore been seen to be the production of local bibliographies. In his article Paul Sturges discusses the present position and shows that only a small part of the country is covered by such bibliographies. In the BLRDD report on local publications reviewed in this issue, the authors argue for the establishment of more local bibliographies, and eventually a co-ordinating office. A description of the organisation of such a local bibliography, *Northern Ireland Local History*, also appears.

One way of improving the production of local bibliography is to use modern technology and, as reported, York University is undertaking a pilot scheme to examine the feasibility of computerising local bibliographical records. If the pilot is successful and finance can be found, the end result could transform the faceof local bibliography by providing a national database of local publications, with on-line search facilities, and the ability to reproduce entries for specific areas.

Sturges' recommendations, and the York project, if implemented, would largely solve our problems — or would they? A major stumbling block has always been the identification of local minor publications, simply because there are so few guides. Librarians have to spend a good deal of time and ingenuity on tracking down these items, and Sturges thinks that rather than becoming better, the situation has worsened in the last ten years. Local bibliographies can only be as good as their input, and few studies, apart from this BLRDD one, have been undertaken to find out how good this input is. An important recommendation in the report is that all staff should be expected to play their part: this is obviously a way in which branch staff, who are working in a community and know what is going on, can assist in providing information about local publications. How far is this done in your library? Do you look out for and report on locally published items? This really is one way in which everyone with an interest in local history can help to ensure identification of such material, and ultimately aid the building up of a comprehensive bibliography for their locality.

# Local and Regional Bibliographies: a state of the art report

Among the recommendations of the report on the 'Investigation of local publications' sponsored by the British Library, Research and Development Department not long ago, was that "A system of bibliographies, preferably regional bibliographies, needs to be encouraged". As joint author of that report, the present state of local and regional bibliography is of particular interest to me. The report was particularly concerned with the problem of current bibliography, but it is in restrospective bibliography that there is most to show. Fine published bibliographies, such as those for Kent, and Norfolk², are there to be seen; a massive scheme to cope with the emormous problems of Lancashire bibliography has been under way for many years³; and other areas, such as Lincolnshire and Staffordshire, have fresh schemes in immediate prospect. There is also at least one current county bibliography, the Sussex Bibliography.

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graphy is on producing an index, which at present the bibliography lacks. Some market research done by Michael Lister recently suggested that an index would not only make the bibliography more useful, but might also make it easier to obtain new subscriptions. The index would almost certainly be produced by some mechanical method. With *East Midlands Bibliography* too there is every possibility of change, as a new editor (Mrs V Langworthy of Derbyshire County Library) is already bringing her own ideas to the task.

The development which could, however, change the whole pattern of local and regional bibliography is the Local Studies Database mentioned earlier. This was launched for public attention at a hastily arranged, but very well-attended meeting at York University Library on 22nd June, 1983. Margaret Evans of the library has assembled funds from various sources, principally the Manpower Services Commission, and created a system which uses microcomputers to record bibliographic data, which is then transferred to the University's mainframe computer. Once in the computer, the information can be made available in very much the same way as are the bibliographic databases provided by Dialog or Orbit. Printing off of a particular section (a county or town for instance) can be done to order in either hardcopy or microform, and online retrieval is also quite within the capacity of the system. Input forms which can cope with the usual bibliographic problems presented by local studies material have been devised, and as a pilot project material on the City of York and the County of Warwick is being recorded. Laser printing techniques have already proved able to produce an attractive and reasonably priced bibliography, complete with index, from the existing database records.

What the University has done is to provide a ready-made instrument for any future local or regional bibliographies, current or retrospective. The initial reaction of those local studies librarians who had the system explained to them, saw it up on a VDU, and examined printed pages on June 22nd, was very favourable. Only two requirements are necessary for interested parties in any part of the country to input to the system and derive their chosen bibliographic product from it. However, as you might expect, these are considerable hurdles. The first is that they should be able to collect their data and feed it into a suitable microcomputer provided with the York software. This may not be too problematical for an existing bibliographical project, but the second hurdle is that York should be able to provide the mainframe storage space for the data, and the team to service the system. This latter requirement means money, and York are launching an appeal for sponsorship, which if successful will make the system available for potential contributors and users. If they are successful, and it is much to be hoped that they will be, then the horizons for all types of local studies bibliographic work will be enormously expanded.

This is chiefly true of the online facility. If the content of the database gradually expands to cover more and more of the country, then the prospect of national searching for material on particular topics will become increasingly real. This might seem pointless to anyone who regards the use of local studies material as something equally local. The answer to this is that although this may be the current pattern of use, the potential for comparative work that a national search for local writings on a topic will create is very exciting. For local studies as a discipline to improve beyond its present level it needs to be less parochial and more aware of comparable experience in other parts of the country. Too often the amateur makes ludicrous claims about the uniqueness of some aspects of his locality: too often the professional is frustrated in a search for valid comparisons. National availability of detailed bibliographical information is a sine qua non for improving local studies discipline and pastime. A better network of local and regional bibliographies can go a long way towards providing this. York's initiative, if successful, will take the whole exercise into a fresh dimension.

## Notes

- 1 R P Sturges and D Dixon, An investigation of local publications, British Library Research and Development Department Report No. 5645, (Loughborough, Dept. of Library and Information Studies, Loughborough University, 1983). A review appears later in this issue.
- 2 G Bennet, W Bergess, C Earl, The Kent bibliography (London, Library Association, London and Home Counties Branch, 1977). F. Darroch and B Taylor, Bibliography of Norfolk history (Norwich, University of East Anglia, Centre for East Anglian Studies, 1975).
- 3 Recently taken over by Mrs J F Bardsley of the North Western Regional Library System.
- 4 The proposed Lincolnshire bibliography is being organised by Lincolnshire County Library. The Staffordshire bibliography is to be produced by the Centre for the Study of Local and Community History, University of Keele.
- 5 Published annually by East Sussex County Library.
- 6 Northern Bibliography, Northern Regional Library System, Central Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE99 1MC.
  East Midlands Bibliography, Derby Central Library, The Wardwick, Derby, DE1 1HS.
  East Anglian Bibliography, Central Library, Clapham Rd South, Lowestoft, NR32 1DR.
- 7 Published annually by the National Library of Scotland.
- 8 Published three times a year by the Library Service of the North Eastern Education and Library Board. An article about the bibliography appears later in this issue.

Paul Sturges.

# The Northern Ireland Local Studies List

The predecessor of the Northern Ireland Local Studies List, Northern Ireland Local History, resulted from a meeting of the Deputy Librarians in the Province in late 1968. It began as a two page list of new books acquired by contributing libraries¹ and was issued every month. It was arranged alphabetically by author or title and gave the location of the holding library. In 1969 Mr. Hugh Russell, of the Belfast Public Library Service, became editor. Under his editorship the scope of this "additions list" was broadened to include selected articles from books, journals and newspapers which were relevant to Northern Ireland: government publications were also included. "Northern Ireland Local History: a checklist of books and articles on Northern Ireland" ran from Vol. 1 1970 to Vol. 3 1972. After June 1972 there were no further issues.

In June 1979 Mr. J. Francis, Chief Librarian of the North Eastern Education and Library Board circulated a paper recommending the revival of a Northern Ireland Local Studies List. The five Public Library Services<sup>2</sup> agreed to produce a co-operative local studies list. It was decided to proceed with a pilot scheme, the library service of the N.E.E.L.B. acting as editor. The North Eastern Board gave initial financial approval for a pilot scheme which ran during 1981. Two issues of *Northern Ireland Local Studies* were published and financial approval for the project to continue was obtained.

The main intention in producing *Northern Ireland Local Studies* is to provide a current awareness bibliography of the literature of Northern Ireland interest presently being published. Privately published or locally produced material may not be included in any publisher's catalogue, B.B.I.P. or B.N.B. Items of Northern Ireland interest in provincial newspapers and journals will not always appear in B.H.I. or B.T.I.. There are not enough bibliographical tools to help with the growing demand for relevant information. Although the list is intended as a current bibliography it will obviously acquire retrospective importance.

The North Eastern Board continues to edit *Northern Ireland Local Studies* and currently there are three issues a year covering January-April; May-August and September-December. New books and booklets which have been published in Northern Ireland since 1981, or are by a Northern Ireland author, or whose subject content is Northern Ireland or with a Northern Ireland interest, and which have been added to the stock of one of the contributing libraries, are suitable for entry. No attempt has been made to duplicate the Northern Ireland H.M.S.O. lists of publications but the editing Board has assumed responsibility for selecting government publi-

cations for inclusion. Individual O.S. maps in the 1:10,000, 1:2,500 and 1:1250 series are not included. However town plans and maps outside of these series are given entries. Northern Ireland Local Studies includes non-book materials, acquired by a contributing library, with a Northern Ireland interest — either the content or artist — except for recorded music. The panel of Audio-Visual Librarians (N.I.) have produced a Recorded Music List (N.I.) for 1982.<sup>3</sup> The first issue of a new journal, or the last issue of a discontinued journal, is included. In addition interesting and relevant articles from journals and newspapers are given separate entries. A union list of journals with an Irish interest was drawn up. Each library service was allocated certain journals to index.

BELB SELB SEELB NEELB WELB No. of journals indexed 78 41 28 27 26

A similar list of provincial and national newspapers was also drawn up and divided out. A list of the journals and newspapers indexed is given in the January-April issue for each year. The 'Non-Irish' journals have yet to be divided up for indexing in the same systematic way. At present entries from these journals are included when they are noticed. Part of the problem here is the volume of 'Non-Irish' journals and also the fact that they are not held by the Irish and Local Studies departments of the various library boards but by other departments.

Indexing has meant an increased work load. In some library services the indexing may be done by several people, with others there may be only one person responsible. Each indexer makes a personal decision as to what is 'interesting and relevant'. Any article which is considered speculative ("Will British Enkalon fold?"); futuristic ("British Enkalon: Antrim's hope heads for disaster"); deals with day to day developments ("John de Lorean flies to the States for talks") or is too local ("The Masserenes and Antrim Town") will not be included. Historical reviews of political events are given ("The big house on the hill: Stormont over the past 50 years") but everyday developments are not, ("N.I. Assembly discuss 'Draft Dogs Order' "). There has been a tightening up of the journal and newspaper articles included. Some items contained in Northern Ireland Local Studies 1981 would not be included in Northern Ireland Local Studies 1983. After each issue a list of rejected entries is circulated. This mostly consists of journal and newspaper articles and the reason for their rejection is given. Less frequently these rejects will include a published item which appeared in a previous list. By circulating the rejects a set of indexing principles "by example" will be built up. If it is felt that an item has been incorrectly excluded then it can be re-submitted for inclusion in the next issue.

The layout of the entries is based upon AACR2. As only the NEELB uses AACR2, the other library services must adapt their own catalogue entries before submitting them. During the pilot scheme everyone received a set of sample entries, and it was hoped that these would help with the unfamiliar layout. The entries are arranged in an adapted Dewey 19th sequence. The present headings, modified from those originally adopted in the light of experience, is as follows:

# GENERAL PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION SOCIAL SCIENCES

Sociology

Politics and government

Economics

Law

Public administration

Social problems and services

Education

Commerce, communications, transportation

Customs, etiquette, folklore

LANGUAGE ÂND LITERATURE

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ARTS AND LEISURE

Art

Craft

Theatre

Music

Architecture and planning

Sport and recreation

Food and accommodation

**GEOGRAPHY** 

TRAVEL AND HISTORY — general by

county

## BIOGRAPHY

The entries submitted for each individual list determine the headings which are used under SOCIAL SCIENCES and ARTS AND LEISURE. This more flexible approach, and the attempt to use terms which are familiar to everyone, not just librarians, has given Northern Ireland Local Studies a less formal and more reader orientated approach. The entries are arranged alphabetically by author or title within their subject, except for the biographies where the heading is the name of the subject of the article. Each entry in an issue is given a running number and every issue is individually numbered from No. 1 onwards.

Each issue contains an author index, a place index and a list of local publishers' addresses. The author index is only for the books and booklets. Arranged alphabetically it refers to the relevant entry number(s) in the main list. The place index gathers together those place references which have been scattered by the subject arrangement. Specific towns, villages, parishes or townlands are listed alphabetically under the appropriate county. With earlier issues only the numbers of the relevant entries were given under the BELFAST heading. This was not a helpful arrangement and now a brief indication of subject content is also given.

Each indexer indicates on the entries the relevant subject heading; a place name, if appropriate, and a brief annotation if the entry needs explanation. A substantial amount of the work is therefore done at the indexing stage. The list of local publishers' addresses includes the more obscure, private or provincial publishers. To help with inter-library loans each contributing library receives a location list, for the books and pamphlets, with every issue.

Editing and production takes two people about four weeks, as the work is spread over one month, because of other ongoing duties.

Sorting and checking entries 3 days
Typing up main list 1 week
Checking stencils and compiling indexes 3 days
Correcting main list and typing indexes 3 days
Checking index stencils 1 day
Duplicating 1 week

1,100 copies of each issue are duplicated. Each library service receives about 150-200 copies and the remainder are held in reserve at NEELB. The list is collated by the individual library services. The covers were designed, and are provided, by B.E.L.B. and are distributed to the other boards along with the main list. Distribution has been a problem. At first copies were delivered by a series of time consuming interboard van runs. Now wherever possible, the list is delivered via meetings where the five boards are represented. If this is not possible the N.E.E.L.B. van runs are extended to branch libraries in the other Area Boards. Each library service has responsibility for distributing their copies to their own branch and mobile libraries, and also the historical societies; major schools and teacher centres; newspapers and publishers within their own area board. These copies are distributed free of charge, but it is also possible for an individual or an institution to subscribe to Northern Ireland Local Studies — a year's subscription for three issues is £5. At present there are only six subscribers to the list, which has been disappointing.

However it is hoped that this is not an indication of lack of interest. The list was well publicised when it first came out, with articles in local and provincial papers and professional journals.

The support, advice and close involvement of the N.E.E.L.B. Chief Librarian, Mr. J. Francis, has been evident not only in the revival of Northern Ireland Local Studies, but in its continued production. Mr. Francis is chairman of the editorial panel which meets after the production of each list to discuss matters which may have arisen. The possibility of a cumulative index is being considered at the moment. It is hoped that there will be an annual index, starting with the 1983 issues, with a five year index being produced in 1985 [1981 no:1—1985 no:14]. The practicalities of these indexes have yet to be discussed, but there is the possibility that a subject index will be included. There are no plans at present to extend the scope of Northern Ireland Local Studies beyond the five Public Library Services in Northern Ireland.

## Notes

- 1 Antrim County Library; Armagh County Library; Belfast Public Library; Down County Library; Fermanagh County Library; the Linen-Hall Library; Londonderry County Library; Tyrone County Library. The Libraries of the New University of Ulster and of Queen's University Belfast joined at a later stage.
- 2 Public Library Services in Northern Ireland are provided by five Education and Library Boards. These are: Belfast, North Eastern, South Eastern, Southern and Western.
- 3 A note on this publication appears later in this issue.

Lynn McFetridge, Local Studies Librarian, North-Eastern Education and Library Board and Editor, Northern Ireland Local Studies.

# Education and the Role of the Local Studies Liaison Librarian — The first ten years.

Birmingham's plans for a new central library, in 1973, included the expansion of reference library services providing the opportunity to develop greater liaison with education, particularly in the local studies field. The specialist, and indeed unique, post of 'Liaison Librarian', within the Local Studies department of the Reference Library, was created in August 1973 to provide the necessary link between the department's resources and educational institutions; principally local primary and secondary schools. Since the appointment of the first post-holder, Patrick Baird (now head of the department), the service has played an important role in establishing the local/environmental studies approach in the curriculum of Birmingham schools. The post was extended to incorporate 'environmental studies' (a broader term allied to educational usage) with my appointment in August 1981, to provide a more interdisciplinary approach by involving other subject departments of the reference library; particularly the Science and Technology and Social Sciences departments.

The Local Studies and Archives department is on the sixth and seventh floors respectively, of the Central Library. Within these two sections can be found one of the largest collections of resource material, for a specific area (i.e. Birmingham and the surrounding counties) in the country. Ecclsiastical, private, business and educational records are housed in the Archives section and administred by the Archivist, who is also responsible for certain educational groups, e.g. genealogy and some university groups, often in collaboration with the Liaison Librarian. The department also has two conservation staff who help with the mounting of exhibition material and produce protective wallets and covers for documents to be used by children and students. There is a classroom, with accommodation for forty people, attached to the department containing facilities for showing slides and displaying materials. Facilities for photocopying and microprinting are also available within the department.

The need for a full-time local studies librarian to liaise with teachers and others connected with education had much to do with local developments in education; it arose initially from the Education department's Inspectorate's progressive attitude toward promoting the environment and, most significantly, in utilizing local resource materials — princiaplly through 'project work'. Rather than appoint a teacher to work within the department, it was thought more practical to use the traditional skills of the librarian and develop an advisory, promotional and teacher role, thus providing a unique yet functional post for the expansion of the Local Studies department's services. It

is a post that has been actively supported, since its inception, by the Inspectorate, which has proved a worthwhile ally in aiding a closer relationship between teacher and librarian.

The Liaison Librarian's fundamental aim is to pomote the use of the libraries resources, particularly those in the Local Studies and Archives department, to teachers, children and others involved in local/environmental studies projects. This is best achieved by arranging class visits to the department in order to see at first hand the range of resource material available. If it is not possible for a group to visit the library the Liaison Librarian can visit the school with a selection of material. Teachers are however encouraged to visit the department personally, before the class visit, or Liaison Librarians visit the school, in order to see what material is available, assess its suitability and to discuss the project(s), and numbers, age and abilities of the children involved (and any special requirements e.g. of handicapped children). Photocopies of relevant documents such as map and directory extracts can be supplied in order for the teacher to prepare the children before the visit. The Liaison Librarian can also refer the teacher to other possible sources of information both within the library and outside. The majority of requests for assistance come from primary schools (about 55%), because their timetable is the most flexible and can thus accommodate project work more easily. Secondary school usage has increased in recent years (about 35%) due to the Examination Boards directive on using primary source evidence. Higher education and adult education usage tends to be much smaller, as students are expected to be able to use the library with little formal instruction.

On arrival at the central library the group is met by the Liaison Librarian and briefly introduced to the library and its procedures e.g. collection of reference libarary admission tickets, the need for noise levels to be kept to a minimum, and most importantly, to observe safety procedures on the escalators. Despite the obvious disadvantages of using escalators with large numbers of children, it does provide the opportunity to see the various departments and the size of the building generally. Small groups, up to fifteen, are preferred, particularly for older children invovled in examinations, where individual attention is needed; but whole classes of thirty-five to forty are not uncommon. On reaching the classroom on the sixth floor, details about the purpose of the visit and length of stay are clarified with the teacher. All groups are given a brief talk about the library and its layout before talking specifically about the Local Studies Department. A selection of different types of material, relating to the project area(s), is displayed and shown to the group and its uniqueness and need for careful handling is stressed. Some may be horrified to see children of nine or ten using original documents, but with careful preparation no harm should come to the documents; children are often very careful once they realize how precious such material is, even more so than an

enthusiastic teacher! With the primary school it is important to act more as a 'teacher' and ask the children plenty of questions. Once the intitial introduction is finished the teacher can take over and organize the class into groups to look at the material in detail. The primary school project may be limited to a particulr local theme, e.g. canals, industry, Victorian life or war time, but the most popular theme is the study of their own area. A typical range of material for this study would include inclosure and tithe maps (and schedules), OS maps, street and trade directories, census returns and photographs. This is a common topic because it introduces the concept of change though time and can also be linked to an urban trail of the area, as well as incorporating 'study' skills. Despite the significance of documents, artefacts are also an important aspect of the local studies project, therefore liaison with the Museum is particularly important. Teachers may plan more than one visit to the department, but it is up to them to provide the necessary preparation (e.g. worksheets) if the children are to get the fullest possible benefit. The Liaison Librarian will also show, in small groups, catalogues and indexes (on a superficial level) and microfilm machines. The session will normally close with a question time, before the class are led back to the entrance.

Secondary school visits mainly consist of examination groups (C.S.E., 'O' and 'A' level), which requries individual project work, although first and second year classes may be involved in a class project. The size of the building can be somewhat overwhelming for the examination student who will need to use the library by himself to complete project work, therefore the visit (possibly their first to the library) needs to be well organized. They will need to be shown individual project work, although first and second year classes may be involved in a class project. The size of the building can be somewhat overwhelming for the examination student who will need to use the library by himself to complete project work, therefore the visit (possibly their first to the library) needs to be well organized. They will need to be shown individual departments as important references even for a local studies project may be found in other departments; some students will, in any case, take a subject outside the local studies field. It is important to liaise with other appropriate members of staff who can show the students their respective departments, particularly as they are organized differently from the Local Studies department. It was for this reason that the Young Peoples Information Services team (YPIST) was set up, comprising individual members from the different departments, to co-ordinate services to young people. A set of transparencies, of the central library, was produced to show groups visiting the library (and to take out to schools), followed by a more indepth tour of relevant departments in smaller groups. Some secondary school groups are arranged by the Children's library, which may include a visit to the Local Studies department for a brief introduction.

In the classroom a range of material, particularly of primary sources, will be displayed covering the various popular themes for history examination projects, e.g. transport, crime, health, education. . . . After a brief introduction to the types of material available and how they might be used, small groups are shown the procedure for looking up and requesting items relevant to their projects. This is particularly important as all the Local Studies department's resources are on closed access. The Liaison Librarian can then discuss the project areas with individual members of the group. After this introductory visit the students will be expected to come in by themselves to continue their project work.

The Liaison Librarian can also visit the school, with either slides or a selection of relevant documents. In the primary school the teacher often requires a talk about the history of the area or a particular theme (e.g. Victorian children), followed by a session with the children looking at the material. Many visits to schools are followed-up by a visit to the library. The busiest period is the late spring and early summer terms, when many schools are involved in project work for the annual Environmental Studies Exhibition, organised by the Education department. This years theme of 'Village Birmingham' was particularly popular. Some schools prefer to use their local branch library, and invite the Liaison Librarian to talk to the children there. It has the distinct advantage of allowing the children to see some specialist material from the Local Studies department and to use and borrow the branch library's resources. Often, one of the children's librarians will give a talk on fiction books related to the project e.g. canals; homefront. . . .

Having looked in some detail at the direct contact with classes of children, it is perhaps appropriate to say something about how the service is promoted to teachers. By far the most successcul method of promotion is via word of mouth; a generation of early Environmetal Studies post holders have moved into head and deputy-headship posts, passing on their enthusiasm for local studies. When the Liaison Librarian's post was created, publicity was given in the Birmingham Education Bulletin, and this publication has been used since to promote the service — for instance to advertise courses and exhibitions. Within the Libraries department it is obviously promoted by different sections, particularly from the children's services team and branch libraries. The Education Department's Inspectorate's team have also played an important role in promoting the services offered by the Liaison Librarian and Local Studies department, principally through its teachers centres and inservice training courses. A number of very successful courses for teachers have been run by the libraries department, in collaboration with the Inspectorate. Early in 1983 a series of five courses were organized jointly by the Musems' Local History and Education departments and the Local Studies department, linked to the Environmetal Studies Exhibition theme. The Liaison Librarian has also participated in a number of school consortium courses and teacher training college courses. In these courses a talk about the services offered and types of material available is given, and illustrated with examples of relevant documents and school projects (which have been collected). The other major area of promotion is through exhibitions of resource material, both within the library and outside — in schools, branch libraries and church halls. Often the exhibitions are linked to a particular local theme and, in the school, can be seen by the whole school and by parents. A recent exhibition in a church also provided good publicity and was visited by several local schools who were inspired to do a study of the area.

In this article I have merely outlined the role of the Local Studies Liaison Librairan with respect to education, but I hope that it has given some indication of what has been achieved in Birmingham over the last ten years. As for the future many interesting developments look set to take place — the development of computer programmes for local/environmental studies; oral history archives; a publications programme of local histories and guides for teachers and children; multi-cultural education (West Midlands Study) and perhaps the development of regional resource centres.

Andrew Blizzard Liaison Librarian, Local Studies Dept., Birmingham Public Libraries.

# On-line for the Eighteenth Century: a one day meeting on the Eighteenth Century Short title Catalogue.

Exeter, January 24th 1984.

Local studies collections and record offices throughot the country hold much locally produced material from the eighteenth century which is not represented in the national collections and this meeting aims to inform librarians about the ESTC, and to let them see how they can contribute to the Catalogue as well as benefit from its facility for on-line searching which is available through Blaise. The programme includes an introduction to ESTC by Michael Crump, the Assistant Editor, a paper on contributing to ESTC by Ian Maxted, Local Studies Librarian, Exeter, and one on researchers and the ESTC file by Jo Cox, a postgraduate researcher from Exeter University. It is also hoped to have a terminal available to demonstrate searches, and there will be a display of items revealed when making returns for Devon to the ESTC file.

This meeting is jointly arranged by the LSG and the Rare Books Group of the L.A. Full details from Ian Maxted, Exeter Central Library, Exeter, EX4 3PQ. The fee is £7.50.

# Working with Wireless: some experiences

On May 1st 1982 a new radio station went on air in Cambridge. However, BBC Radio Cambridgeshire did not just magically appear: it had been planned and postponed, anticipated and despaired of, but at last things began to happen. A manager was appointed and spent much time acquainting himself with organisations and societies which might benefit from and be a benefit to the proposed station. As part of this exploration his secretary discovered the Cambridgeshire Collection, the local studies department in Cambridge central library, and shortly afterwards her boss came to see for himself and the die was cast.

As the new building for the station neared completion staff were appointed and assembled for an extensive initial training session in London. Various local people were invited to attend to speak about aspects of the county that the station was to serve. The County Chief Executive and the Leader of the council went together, as did the Cambridge Town Clerk and Leader and their counterparts from Peterborough: the Euro-M.P. went on his own, and so did I, as librarian of the Cambridgeshire collection. I was charged with an introduction to the area and its overall problems — new roads, housing, planning issues, the character of the potential listeners — and I did this by using transparencies of material in our collection: what better to introduce new motorways than a 1905 picture of the last turnpike gate?

On the day the station opened I had an invitation to join the dignitaries and civic leaders for the official words spoken by the Chairman of Governors, not as a bystander but as a member of its Radio Advisory Council. Each BBC local station has one of these Councils, appointed by the Governors of the BBC to advise the management about the reaction to their programmes and generally to involve themselves in the promotion of the facility: along with some councillors, a teacher, a Bishop and one or two others I had been nominated, not just for my local knowledge but also because of my mistake in becoming Parish Council chairman, a Charity Trustee and school governor in my home village, which happened to be in a part of the county where there were no other known candidates. Radio Councillors get their names in the station diary and the BBC Handbook and are rewarded for their efforts by the princely bribe of a free weekly copy of 'Radio Times'. They meet every six weeks or so for discussions about presenters and productions, publicity and schedules.

However, my own involvement with Radio Cambridgeshire has been

somewhat more regular, as since it opened I have contributed a regular Monday spot to a magazine programme currently entitled 'Mid-Day'. At first the brief was to take the local events of the current week and show that exacly the same things had happened during that very week at some time within the previous 200 years; it sounds impossible, but in fact we usually found several parallels. This was accomplished by using the detailed indexes to our newspaper files that we have compiled. First I selected a suitable modern happening and then checked the index under that topic looking for the right sort of information in the right week: once this was identified perusal of the actual papers invariably brought other items to light. Following a reorganization I now produce a brief four-minute script on a suitable subject and listeners are invited to phone in with their own memories - of radio and television, cinema, buses and the Home Guard for instance: here my source has been principally the newspaper cuttings files we maintain on over 800 topics and which date back more than twenty years, allied of course to published books and older items from the News index.

There are inevitably many stories about adventures in front of the microphone on a live show, things like the Producer's car breaking down and the consequent need to help the stand-in presenter carry the show till she arrived by expanding a four-minute story to take twenty minutes (with a record break in the middle). There was also the incident of the tape breaking on the recording machine and whipping round the studio noisily, and one on Boxing Day when we came into the studio following a taped concert to find that the whole station had gone off the air (for 'technical reasons' I shall not divulge): in one spell something unscripted happened every week for five weeks! Besides the regular live spots there have inevitably been taped inserts into other programmes — 'Christmas Day in the Workhouse' for December 25th, for example — and I have helped out when necessary if they could not find a more authoritative voice — for instance about prisoner of war camps in the county to link in with a trailer for a Channel 4 televsion programme.

Much of our invovlement is not publicly acknowledged, however. Producers will regularly phone us seeking to talk through ideas or looking for introductions to contacts we might have on a particular issue or topic — for instance 'where can we station the radio car and what clues can we give to enable listeners to track it down?' or they want local information for the 'Guess the year' quiz. Like all journalists they appreciate the assistance they are given and I have enjoyed being a guest on a live broadcast on a punt along 'The Backs' of the colleges, and have been subjected to a 'Desert Island Discs' type of programme and faced with the problem of choosing suitable recordings to fit into the conversation about life from cradle to local collection, but more terrifying than any of this has been to see myself starting from the local page of Radio Times.

However, the reason for these notes has been the programme broadcast during the 'Soundings' slot on Sunday 27th February 1983 which devoted itself to a half hour documentary about the work of the Cambridgeshire collection, its stock, organisation, problems and users, which I hope has given those who heard it an insight into a specialist part of the public library service and has already resulted in a letter from a computer company offering to supply a system capable of meeting some of our difficulties.

Local radio is still developing and diversifying. While eighteen months ago BBC Radio Cambridgeshire was just a hope, the intervening period has seen a challenging and stimulating exploitation of our local collecion. What will happen in the future is anybody's guess but inevitably the station will continue to need background information and continue to reconize the library as a principal supplier, for, as the person who introduced my 'Birthday Honours' programme put it, the local studies librarian and the radio station have a lot in common. We both try to reflect life in our county, one through sound, the other principally through published materials; we can exist separately, but both benefit greatly through co-operation.

M.J. Petty, Local Studies Librarian, The Cambridgeshire Collection, Cambridgeshire Libraries.

# Information Wanted

Chris Baggs, a lecturer at CLW, is anxious to hear from anyone who collects or uses videotapes as part of their local collections. He can be contacted at College of Librarianship, Wales, Llanbadarn Fawr, Aberystwyth, Dyfed. SY23 3AS

Paula Biddlestone, a Postgraduate student at Birmingham Poly is currently engaged upon research into acquisition policies by *local authors* and would be glad to hear from anyone who has a written policy outlining their terms of reference. Paula can be contacted via the Department of Librarianship, Birmingham Polytechnic, Perry Barr, Birmingham B42 2SU.

Brian Hall is currently planning a one-day school on the contemporary social relevance of local studies and would very much like to hear from any local studies librarian working with, or who knows of, any local collection that has adequate resources relating to immigration into this country since 1950 and which reflect recent local history concerning ethnic groups in this country. Brian can also be contacted at Birmingham Poly — same address as Paula!

# Where are the Charters then? . . .

Every librarian remotely connected with local studies has felt the sinking feeling that accompanies the request "We want to write the history of our village. Have you got any charters?". In our county it has not only been patient library staff who have tried to steer such questions into more sensible channels. Many of our noted local historians have spent time helping school-children on the best ways of beginning a parish study and officers of our Society for Lincolnshire History and Archaeology have dealt with many postal and personal enquiries on the history of an ancestor's home town.

It was the problem of providing some easily digested background material for such people that prompted the Society's Local History Sub-Committees to set up a project with the Local Studies Department of the County Library Service — the compilation of Village Information sheets. At first the Committee, which includes two members of the Library Staff, had lofty ideas of editing a latter-day Lincolnshire Domesday Book, but we soon settled for something a great deal simpler, but, we hope, equally as useful in its own way. A questionnaire was drawn up covering merely two sides of a foolscap sheet with spaces where answers could be filled in.

There is to be one sheet for each village and town in Lincolnshire and the information requested contains much that we know from experience will satisfy the first enquiries of a newcomer wanting to discover the history of his locality. The sheet must interest those people who are unaccustomed to the sources of local studies and of course the material must be helpful to both teachers and pupils for elementary local history course work. We were all aware that the basic historical facts about parish histories are available in the many indexes of the Archive Office and the Local Studies Department, but we felt that it would be worthwhile bringing the details together on an Information Sheet that could be handed to a student to take home or that could be sent quickly to an enquirer from another part of the country.

On the prototype sheet we asked for the names of the Wapentake and Deanery to which the village belonged, the dates of Enclosure or the Tithe Award, brief descriptions or archaeological features and notable buildings, charities and prominent families, and so on. As we mulled over many suggestions with endless cups of Committee tea, we became less obsessed by the population figures but more interested in the fairs and feasts, past and present, and unusual customs. We ended up with a heading "miscellaneous information", beloved by local historians, to pacify everyone whose favourite village eccentricity might otherwise have been omitted. We hoped

to strike a balance between making the Information Sheet too complicated and passing over important matters that might stir a reader to further work.

The final draft form was circulated with the Society Newsletter along with publicity asking every member who would to fill in the questionnaire on their own parish at their leisure. The completed forms were then to be returned to the Society Office. Replies have been coming in gradually. We know that coverage of Lincolnshire, a large county with innumerable villages will take a long time and we do not expect the project to be concluded in the near future. We intend to contact the Education Department and Parish Councils in the hope of assistance from teachers and local councillors as well as using knowledgeable library staff. In any case the sheets themselves are not finite. There is a statement on them to the effect that further information will always be welcomed.

A copy of each returned sheet will be sent to the Local Studies Department at Lincoln Reference Library where it will be checked for error — a procedure that should improve the local knowledge of the Local Studies Librarian! Copies of relevant sheets will be forwarded to the branch libraries serving the specific catchment areas and there they will join the Village Packs of photocopied Directory and other material already in existence at these outlets. Other copies will be kept with the Society files. We hope that if the project is successful we may be able to consider printing batches of the Information Sheets for, say, all the parishes in a given Wapentake of the county. In any case the sheets will certainly be available at Society meetings and they will be used as the standard reply to postal enquiries sent to the Society Office.

The Village Information Sheets give a framework for the study of a specific village and a stepping stone to further investigation. One of the most valuable sections is the space for a short bibliography of published information. On one recently finished form to this list was added details of a new manuscript to be deposited with the Record Office. There are also directions to major deposits both in and without the county. Papers relating to Tattershall, for example, are noted as being held in the Devon Archives. As libraries are usually the first call of those eager students seeking the village "charters" the sheets will be a welcome aid to librarians who want to help but who are hardpressed in time and resources. The project is proving beneficial in its results and is an interesting study of co-operation between members of the county's Local History Society and the Library Service.

Elizabeth Anne Melrose Librarian Local Studies Department Lincolnshire Library Service

# Access to Local Studies Material

Local Studies Group post-Conference Seminar, 22-23rd September 1983

Forty-nine people attended the Local Studies Group post-conference seminar at Torquay to listen to a packed programme with the title "Access to Local Studies Materials". Under this head were brought together papers on a variety of aspects of the acquisition, production and exploitation of local studies material.

Four papers dealt particularly with the problem of identifying and acquiring ephemeral or otherwise elusive local studies items. Paul Sturges opened the proceedings with an account of the difficulties of locating material produced by a variety of local organisations and individuals. He drew particularly on information contained in a study of two contrasting areas, the findings of which have been published in a B.L.R.D.D. report which he has recently produced in collaboration with Diana Dixon.\*\*

Chris Makepeace gave two papers which further emphasised the problem of collecting ephemeral material, one paper dealing with the nature of printed emphemera and the other concerned with collecting local publications. He dealt ably with the definition of what is meant by "ephemera", giving examples of the variety of material covered by the term, and suggested positive ways in which staff can acquire transitory material, not forgetting such informal methods as persuading staff to bring to the library publicity material delivered to their homes.

A different viewpoint on the same theme was given by Don Kennington, Director of Capital Planning Information Limited, who took a critical look at the accessibility of local authority publications. He particularly emphasised the lack of co-ordination of publishing programmes within individual authorities, and the difficulty of ascertaining the full range of productions of a local council. Don Kennington was the main author of a B.L.R.D.D. report on this theme, "Access to Local Government Documentation".\*\*

Two of the seminar papers dealt with the production of local publications. Professor Joyce Youings gave a lively account of the problems of editing the publications of a county record society. Professor Youings has been involved in editing the publications of the Devon and Cornwall Record Society since 1952, and her talk made clear the necessity of a kind but firm control to ensure that contributors' texts reach a high standard of accuracy and presentation. She made the point that it is better not to hurry a contributor if one is to be in a position to require revision of the text if that should be desirable.

Roy Field, of Shropshire Libraries, spoke of the public library as publisher; a particularly useful paper for those involved in this demanding task. Shropshire publications are now overseen by a publications panel, with a part-time publications officer (an artist, not a librarian) paid out of the profits of the publications. Geat care is taken to achieve professional standards of production, and the range of publications includes postcards, reprints, original publications, and publications produced jointly with other bodies.

To complete the programme, two speakers dealt with the problem of access to local studies material after it has been added to collections. These two papers may well contain the germ of the most important developments in local studies librarianship considered at this seminar.

Ian Maxted, of the Westcountry Studies Library, Exeter, gave a thought-provoking paper on the computerised cataloguing and indexing of local studies items. His talk ranged from an appraisal of the desirable components of the catalogue entry, to an exploration of the problem of keyword searching for local studies material, and the desirability of developing suitable vocabularies to enable full exploitation of computerised entries.

Finally, Paul Sturges wound up the seminar proceedings with a paper on regional bibliographies. He explained that since he had undertaken to present this paper, developments had taken place which necessitated its rewriting. He was referring to the development at York University Library of a computerised local studies bibliography. In its experimental stage the York bibliography included material from the city of York and from Warwickshire County, but is now on the point of expansion to include entries from other areas. Miss Margaret Evans, in charge of the project at York University Library, attended the seminar and gave details of the scheme. If this should one day become a national bibliography of local history, this seminar will have witnessed the birth of one of the most significant developments in local studies librarianship since the coming of the computer.

Diana Winterbotham, Local Studies Librarian, The Lancashire Library.

STURGES, R.P. and DIXON, D. An investigation of local publications. (B.L.R.D.D. report 5645), 1983.
 ACCESS to local government documentation. (B.L.R.D.D. report 5619), 1981,
 LOCAL government publications: their packaging and marketing. (B.L.R.D.D. report 5745), 1983.

# Minor Publications — BLRDD Report

Sturges, R.P. and Dixon, D. An investigation of local publications. Dept of Library and Information Studies, Loughborough University, 1983, 66pp. £5.00 (BLRDD Report no. 5645). ISBN 0-904641-20-1.

Minor local publications are of undoubted importance to historians and social scientists, but local studies librarians are aware that they are not always very efficient in tracing and acquiring such materials. This report sets out to investigate the problem and to suggest some solutions.

The investigators undertook a pilot study in two contrasting areas — Leicester city and Salop county. They attempted to gather as many relevant publications as possible and then examined those they acquired to identify the characteristics of the publications. This examination seems to confirm what most librarians have felt — that there are many local publications which have useful content, but they are often not added to stock because they are not recorded anywhere, either nationally or locally. Most are slight in format, cheap, are little publicised and many contain little bibliographical detail — few have ISBNs and many are not even dated. The analysis showed significant variations in quantity and type of material published between the two areas, but it is pointed out that in such a small sample a single large publishing unit can distort the result.

There are two main areas of recommendation. The first is to improve the effectiveness of the local collecting of materials — the authors comment that while the basic techniques used at prsent for acquiring local publications cannot be greatly improved, they can be more vigilantly applied. The need to increase awareness among all staff at all service points is stressed: this could possibly be done by staff seminars or instruction manuals.

The second main recommendation is that regional bibliographies be established — only a few exist at present — and that the first step in setting up a network of such bibliographies should be the establishment of an example in a suitable area. If the process of encouraging new regional bibliographies proved successful, the setting up of a central co-ordinating office should be considered. The authors consider that the LA and the British Library could encourage the setting up of such bibliographies by the sponsorship of seminars and courses on the subject, and by the publication of a manual.

This is an important report for local studies librarians as it deals with an acknowledged but little researched problem, and makes some worthwhile recommendations. It is well worth reading.

# Have you seen . . .?

Some recent items of interest to local studies librarians

Brown, D.R. and Rickerson, C. Establishing local history collections: a bibliography for starting up a local history collection . . . RQ 22(4) Summer 1983, pp 365-8

Although the items listed are mainly American, this is a useful basic annotated bibliography on local studies librarianship. RQ itself and all the items listed, with the exception of History News are available from the LA Library. Two errors in citation have been noted: Marten (Wilson Library Bulletin) was published in 1954, and Reed (J. Librarianship) in 1975.

Chandler, J. Indexes for local and family history: a user's view. The Indexer, 13(4) October 1983, pp 223-227.

A brief survey of the types of indexes to materials in libraries and record offices, commenting on their quality and value to local historians, and including notes on the likely effects of computers on genealogical research.

Hazel, R. Hereward is awake! New Libary World, 84 (995) May 1983, pp 78, 80.

Short article about the involvement of Peterborough Division of Cambridgeshire Libraries with Hereward Radio, the Peterborough Independent Local Radio station. Includes notes on the local studies contribution.

# Northern Ireland Recorded Music List, 1982

This is a new bibliography, the first annual issue covering January to November 1982. It includes all commercial recordings, both on disc and cassette, made by artists either originating from or resident in Northern Ireland. It includes all types of music from punk to classical, with the largest proportion being country and western.

This is a useful venture, as information on recorded music is difficult to come by. For local studies librarians it would be of great help if it could also include non-commercial recordings, but this obviously creates even more difficulties. The current volume is available at £1.95 + 20p postage/packing from: NIRML, Department of Library and Information Studies, The Queen's University of Belfast, Belfast BT7 1NN.

# Notes and News

A local studies database project.

The University of York has established a pilot project to test a methodology for constructing a bibliographic database of printed materials in the field of local studies. The eventual aim is to provide an on-line information service for local studies: the database will be national in scope, with the facility for extracting information for particular localities. The entries from the pilot project (for the city of York and the county of Warwick) are all Blaise—compatible and arranged systematically with author and subject indexes. At present the project is funded by the University, the Manpower Services Commission and the Oliver Sheldon Memorial Trust, but further sponsors are being sought. For further information see the article by Paul Sturges in this issue. A fuller account of the project will appear later.

At the time of writing the Data Protection Bill is still making its way through Parliament, having completed its passage through the Lords and having had its first reading in the Commons. The Library Association has been concerned with various aspects of the Bill, and has made various representations to the Home Office on, among other topics, the use of data for historical, statistical and research purposes, and has succeeded in having some changes made. It is hoped that a further amendment will be introduced to allow the use of data for archival purposes as well as those mentioned above.

The story of the Bill is complex and, as its effects on libraries generally could be considerable, the Association has spent a great deal of time on it: anyone wishing to find out about the LA's activities in this connection should get in touch with Ann Hobart at Ridgmount Street. As mentioned in the October Record (p.347) an article by Eric Davies on the implications of the draft legislation will appear shortly.

The British Library has recently set up a Consultative Group on Newspapers. Its aim is to act as a channel of communication between the British Library and newspaper producers, librarians and users in the United Kingdom. It will consider and comment on matters relating to newspapers in the British Library Reference Division, particularly in connection with acquisition, storage, preservation and use. It will also consider and suggest action on any matters relating to newspaper collections, with particular reference to the role that the British Library Newspaper Library can play in developing newspaper collections and services in the United Kingdom.

The LSG's respresentative on the Consultative Group is Frank Manders, Local Studies Librarian, Newcastle City Libraries. A report on its activities will appear in a later issue of this journal.

"The Cambridgeshire Collection and Secondary Schools 1983" is the result of a teacher secondment for one term to the Cambridge local studies library. It includes a summary of the problems of teaching local history in secondary schools, a detailed guide to the collection, and a conclusion which emphasises that any proposed increase in schools' use of the collection cannot be carried without additional staffing which might come from either the library or education departments.

Copies are available from Mike Petty, Cambridgeshire Collection, Central Library, 7 Lion Yard, Cambridge CB2 3QD at £2.00 plus postage.

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# A Lancashire Centenary Exhibition

The Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society is one of the major local historical societies in the north-west. Founded in 1883, it has published a run of Transactions containing many papers valuable for the study of local history in the area.

In order to commemorate the Society's centenary in 1983, the Lancashire Library co-operated with the Society in organising a series of exhibitions in libraries throughout the county. Posters and leaflets giving information about the Society were prepared, and each exhibition featured as part of the display an article of local interest selected from the Transactions. The size of each exhibition varied according to local conditions, but all were held during September or October to coincide with the Society's own centenary activities.

It was felt by the Library that the venture had been successful in bringing the society to the attention of the public, but perhaps even more valuable in strengthening the contacts between the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society and the Lancashire Library.

# Information Resources for Leisure and Recreation: a joint RSIS/Aslib Seminar

On the surface this did not appear to be closely related to the work of the local studies librarian (I was there because I was giving a paper), but in fact, it proved to be quite useful in drawing attention to sources in which local information might appear and which might be overlooked. A majority of those attending were librarians although there were also a few planners.

The morning session concentrated on the theoretical aspects of the subject with such topics as 'Leisure in the 1980s" by Barry Sherman, who was very entertaining, and Tony Veal on "Local authority planning and leisure". However, Brian Burrow's introduction on the problem of identification did produce the fact that Milton Keynes Development Corporation produces a directory of leisure activities and one wondered how many other authorities produce such directories. Although aimed at current awareness, such a list would be of great benefit to local studies librarians as it would enable them to trace organisations which might produce local material.

The afternoon session was concerned with sources of information. Michele Shoebridge from the Sports Documentation Centre at the University of Birmingham dealt with sources of information on sports and sporting activities. Although many of these were intended for the professional and those engaged in organising sports, the list of sources produced did indicate a wide range of works which could contain local information, including periodicals and abstracting and indexing services. For example, theses and sources of information on research were mentioned. It is quite possible that local studies would be included in these sources which the library might not get to know about.

I presented the second paper in the afternoon and dealt with the problems raised by planning documents relating to leisure etc. in the public library. It covered the problems of trying to discover what had been produced, the range of material and the extent to which this material reached the public library and the problems encountered in trying to trace and obtain it. I must admit that I did tread on a few planners' toes, but my general thesis that this material was very difficult to trace and acquire was supported by the librarians present.

The final paper was by Margaret Leighfield on the international aspects of leisure information. She dealt with the problems of trying to bring together those engaged in leisure research and their attempts to provide an international data base on the subject. The main English material is to be found in "Leisure, recreation and tourism abstracts". Although it includes

material from abroad, the index helps one trace local material which is of interest but otherwise might be overlooked. For instance, in volume 8 no. 1 there is an abstract of a Bristol City Council paper on the arts in Bristol and on the same page there is a reference to Hoard's "Directory of theatre research and information resources". From enquiries I have made, it appears that this abstracting journal is not too widely available in the public library sector, but it is one which general reference libraries might consider and then local studies library staff could look through it for material for their own department.

C.E. Makepeace.

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# Committee Matters

The LSG Committee met at LA H/Q on 16th November. Among the items discussed were the following:

- 1. Hedley Thomas, Principal Assistant County Librarian, South Glamorgan, had offered his resignation from the committee prior to the meeting. This was accepted. Hedley had originally been co-opted to the committee in 1978 to represent Wales.
- 2. Post-Conference Seminar This meeting organised by Hon. Secretary Paul Sturges and committee member Ian Maxted, has been highly successful. It attracted almost 50 delegates to hear papers on various aspects of Access to local studies materials.
- 3. Newspapers and indexing one-day school Another meeting organised by committee members Elizabeth Melrose and Mike Petty at Stamford. Again a resounding success which gained some excellent publicity, appropriately enough in the local newspaper!
- 4. The Dorothy McCulla Memorial Prize. The committee has awarded the 1983 Prize to Norma Armstrong of Edinburgh City Libraries. This is due recognition of her long and outstanding contribution to the promotion of local studies librarianship in Scotland and in Edinburgh in particular. It is planned to present Norma with her prize at the Scottish Branch AGM in the New Year.

Robin Ansell, Assistant Hon. Secretary.

## LSG Committee 1984-5

The Group Committee for 1984-5 is as follows. As the number of nominations did not exceed the number of places available no election was necessary.

Chairman: Chris Makepeace, Greater Manchester Planning Department. Vice-Chairman: Ian Jamieson, School of Librarianship and Information Studies, Newcastle Polytechnic.

Hon. Secretary: Paul Sturges, Dept. of Library Studies, Loughborough University.

Hon. Assistant Secretary: Robin Ansell, Somerset County Library.

Hon. Treasurer: Bernard Nurse, Southwark Public Libraries

Members: Patrick Baird, Birmingham Public Libraries

David Cousins, Kent County Library

Michael Dewe, College of Librarianship, Wales

Brian Hall, Dept. of Librarianship, Birmingham Polytechnic

Ian Maxted, Devon County Library

Elizabeth Melrose, Lincolnshire County Library

Michael Petty, Cambridgeshire Libraries

Branch representative: Scotland: Don Martin Strathkelvin, Libraries

North Western: Diana Winterbotham, The

Lancashire Library

London & Home Counties: Julian Watson,

Greenwich Library

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As can be seen from the foregoing list, the Group has committee members in most parts of the country. If you have any ideas or suggestions for the Committee please do not hesitate to contact your nearest committee member or the Hon. Secretary.

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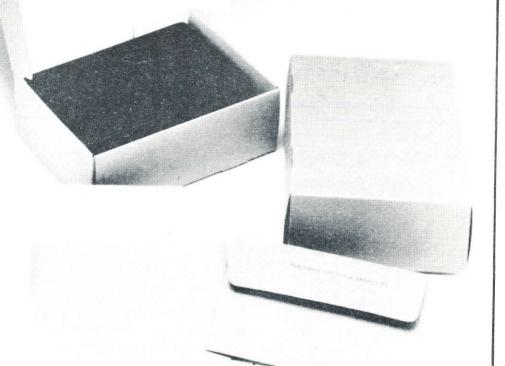
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