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Courtesy: *North Eastern Education and Library Board*

EDITORIAL

Last year marked the Group's 25th anniversary with various events. This issue of *LSL* includes items related to the anniversary, in particular a history of the Group from its inception, in order to provide an "official" picture of what we have achieved over the years. We have achieved a considerable amount during this period: we have raised the profile of local studies as a whole, we have produced two editions of *Guidelines for local studies librarians* and we have made communication between librarians easier by establishing subgroups, by publishing our well-respected journal, and by arranging specialist workshops and providing a programme at every Umbrella weekend school since their inception. We have established an award to celebrate outstanding practitioners among our members, and we have recently published the *Bibliography of local studies librarianship*. All this is chronicled fully in Ian Maxted's article, and the Committee feels that the Group has much to be proud of.

In the light of the above, do we promote ourselves enough? Do individual libraries make enough of themselves to the outside world? Where they have created websites, a great deal of interest has been reported. Of course everyone does, in one form or another, let one's own community know what is happening, using such methods as notices, press releases and perhaps the local press: but how much further do we go? Much of what we do is of interest outside our own areas – either to other libraries or to local historians who live far away. The internet is a great help here. Even so, how good are we at publicity? Other organisations seem to be better: *Local History News* from BALH has a section of news from each sector of local studies service provision, – and libraries are invariably the least represented. For instance, on a rough count of the relevant columns in the last three issues of *Local History News*, there was a total of 36 under Archives (though a few of these were from Local Studies Centres), 26 under Museums, but only 9 from libraries. Surely we have as much to report as the others!

By the time you read this, Umbrella 2003 will be long over, but thoughts will already be turning to Umbrella 2005. It is often difficult for people to attend such residential study schools, as they can be expensive both in terms of cost and time, but Umbrella is a good showcase for local studies librarians, and attracts delegates from other fields. Would anyone who has ideas for papers from LSG for 2005 please contact Diana Dixon, our Hon. Secretary? The Group is also anxious to provide day schools on any topics which would be useful, and again suggestions for topics would be useful. Contact either Diana Dixon or your sub-group Secretary with ideas, as many of these day schools are arranged locally. The group wants to tailor courses to your needs. And, to refer back to the previous paragraph, when they are organised they need to be publicised.

JUBILEE: a short history of the first 25 years of the Local Studies Group

Ian Maxted

This paper is a revised version of one presented at the Jubilee meeting at CILIP headquarters in November 2002. Any organisation such as ours reaching a landmark anniversary deserves to have a permanent record of its origins and development, and this article provides this. The author welcomes any comments or corrections and it is intended that a definitive version will be mounted on the LSG website. The main sources cited in the text are the *Local studies librarian* (LSL) and the *Local Studies Group Newsletter* (N). Committee papers were also used, though access was not available to a complete set: if anyone has a set they are prepared to part with, particularly those prior to 1991, I would be pleased to hear from them with a view to collating them against my own set to provide a complete backup reference set.

The beginnings

The genesis of the LSG lies in the year 1973 with the formation of the local Studies Subgroup of RSIS. It was formed largely under the initiative of Dorothy McCulla, head of the local studies service in Birmingham, whose dynamism shines through in her messages in early issues of the LSG newsletter. A preliminary meeting had been held in 1972 and the first meeting of the committee was held in November 1973 with her in the chair. The membership of the sub-group grew to such an extent that by 1977 it was felt that the interests of local studies librarians would be better served by an independent group. On 1 December 1977 the inaugural meeting was held at Guildhall Library, London when those attending were addressed by Professor Maurice Beresford on the uses of local history resources. (N1:1).

A main aim of the Group was to counteract the isolation of local studies librarians and this remains a continuing task. Even in the 1980s the editor of the *Local Studies Librarian* (LSL 6:2) could point out that at least two local studies librarians were busy compiling parish packs blissfully unaware of each others activity in the field. Nevertheless the activities of the LSG have done much to bring local studies staff together.

The LSG has continually reassessed its role. In 1987 a "think tank" was set up which the following year made various proposals on publicity, publications and the branch structure. A mission statement was published in 1995 (LSL 14:2) which codified much that the LSG had been doing for many years, and each committee meeting brings new ideas forward.

Organisation

The tedious part of setting up any new organisation lies in forming a sustainable structure and browbeating individuals into committing themselves to its work. Local studies librarians are busy people and it says much for the inherent interest of their work that an enthusiastic band of people has been found over the years. A committee was established from the start and has generally met three times a year. For a long time meetings alternated between the Library Association headquarters in London and Birmingham but at present it meets three times a year in Birmingham Central Library. Beside the officers and normal members there have since the 1980s been

representatives of LSG branches, including since the mid 1990s a representative of Local History Panel of the Library and Information Services Council of Northern Ireland. Since the mid 1990s a liaison officer from the LA (and now CILIP) has been attached to the Group and each has brought special expertise, Sandy Norman her knowledge of intellectual property law and Jill Martin her work in the international arena. After the formation of CILIP Damien McManus became liaison officer in 2002. Since about 1990 too there has been a LA/CILIP councillor from the committee who represents the Group's interests and is normally attached to an appropriate committee. Those who have served in this capacity, which can involve the devouring of considerable quantities of paperwork, are Paul Sturges, Neil Bruce, Albert Hartley and Elizabeth Melrose. The Committee has been most fortunate in continuity of membership. Ian Jamieson has been a member since 1977, Diana Winterbotham from the earliest days until 1993, some time after her retirement. Elizabeth Melrose has served since 1981, Ian Maxted since 1982 with a gap between 1988 and 1990. This was because of pressure of work, and it is a tribute to members of the main and branch committees that they are able to devote so much time to LSG affairs amid their busy workload. Other members of the current committee who have served for ten years or more include Philippa Stevens of Hampshire (1988), Alice Lock of Tameside (1990) and Don Martin of East Dunbartonshire (1981).

Officers.

There have been five **chairmen** (the LSG has avoided the term "chair") during the first quarter century. The first was Dorothy McCulla of Birmingham Library, who served from 1973 until her untimely death on 7 March 1981 (N4:1). She was succeeded by Chris Makepeace, Greater Manchester Planning Department (1981-89); Ian Jamieson, Newcastle Polytechnic/University of Northumbria (1990-94); Elizabeth Melrose, Lincolnshire, then North Yorkshire Libraries (1995-1999); and, since 2000, Ian Maxted of Devon Libraries.

Since the establishment of the LSG there have been four **secretaries**, these being Brian Hall, Birmingham Polytechnic (1977-82); Paul Sturges, Loughborough University (1982-86); Patrick Baird, Birmingham Libraries (1988-99); and Diana Dixon, Loughborough University (2000 to date). The work of an efficient secretary can make the role of the chairman a sinecure, as the present chairman can testify, and tribute must also be paid to those who have so often shared the burden, the assistant secretaries and minutes secretaries.

The role of **treasurer** is a difficult one to fill, and it is fortunate that the LSG has only had to seek postholders five times since 1977: Olive Herbert, Sandwell Libraries (1977-81); Bernard Nurse, Southwark Libraries (1981-85); Elizabeth Melrose, Lincolnshire, then North Yorkshire (1985-92); Paul Drew, College of Librarianship Wales (1993-94); and Philip Thomas (Birmingham) from 1994 to the present.

Annual General Meeting

This has been held in various parts of the country, usually as part of a branch meeting. It is normally a matter of formality and receives the annual report and accounts which are published in the *Local Studies Librarian*. The accounts typically show about four fifths of the income deriving from capitation, perhaps one tenth from surpluses for conferences, five per cent from sales of publications and another five per cent from interest. As far as expenditure is concerned the two issues of the *Local Studies Librarian* typically eat up more than half of the income, committee

expenses about one fifth, grants to subgroups about ten percent and postage and stationery a similar proportion.

Membership

That the LSG filled a long-felt need can be seen by the rapid growth of membership. Soon after its inauguration it stood at 622 and by the end of 1978 it had risen to 847. By 1982 it stood at 1500, rising to 1700 by 1986, 1800 by 1992 and peaking at a little under 2000 in 1996. Since then it has fallen back somewhat and now stands at a little under 1700. In addition to normal membership, from 1983 it was possible for personal affiliates who were not members of the LA to join and by 1985 there were 16 such members. In addition the Group has conferred life membership on a small number of people, including Joe Fisher of Glasgow and Gyula Mandli and Erzsebet Ganes of Hungary.

Activities

Publications

The main publications of the LSG are its periodicals which have appeared throughout the lifetime of the Group and regularly reach every member automatically as part of their entitlement.

- *Newsletter*. The first issue of the *Newsletter* was published in November 1977 as a duplicated A4 set of stapled sheets under the editorship of Brian Hall. It was a lively, informal yet informative publication but not a suitable vehicle for more substantial articles. The last issue appeared in Autumn 1981.

- *Local studies librarian*. This was established in 1982 when the LSG had a large enough membership base to sustain a more formal publication. Its editor has always been Ian Jamieson who, as a library school lecturer has been able to retain a broad view of the local studies field and maintain a good flow of articles which reflect the wide range of issues that local studies librarians have to confront. It appears twice a year. There have been useful indexes to the articles, reviews, reports of meetings, notes and news and official notices compiled by Elizabeth Melrose and Alice Lock. Other publications are mentioned under branches. A publications sub-committee was set up in 1981 with the aim of producing a series of pamphlets. It was reconvened in 1986 and a house history leaflet commissioned in 1987, but the proposed series of guides to sources has never materialised as a central LSG initiative. It was not until 1990 that a logo - that sine qua non of any organisation - was designed by Michael Dewe, a long-standing Committee member from the College of Librarianship, Wales, its concentric circles representing local, regional, national and international history (LSL 9:2), and this was used on the Group's first publicity leaflet which was prepared for the UmbrellA conference in 1991. However the LSG has been associated with a number of publications by Committee members, notably Ian Jamieson's contributions on local studies in *British librarianship and information work* 1976-80, 1981-85 and 1986-90, *Local studies librarianship* by committee member Harold Nichols (1979), and the *Manual of local studies librarianship*, edited by Michael Dewe, which was published by Gower in two volumes in 1987 and 1991, containing contributions by a range of LSG members. A new work under Dewe's editorship, *Local studies collection management*, published by Ashgate, appeared in 2002. There was a more direct LSG involvement in *Local studies librarianship: a world bibliography* by Diana

Dixon, which LA Publishing issued in 2001. At times too the Group's work has reached a wider audience, for example through the series of articles in the *Library Association record* of December 1988 or Diana Winterbotham's article on local studies librarianship in the *International encyclopaedia of librarianship*.

Evidence to committees

This was among the first activities of the newly formed group. Already in 1978 evidence was presented to the Blake Committee to review local history (N1:2) This was published in 1979 by the Standing Conference for Local History (N2:2) and among other things led to the relaunching of the organisation as the British Association for Local History in 1982. David Hayns, the Association's Field Officer visited many members of the Group when preparing his report in 1982-3. In 1979 evidence was given to the Committee of Enquiry into the working of the Public Records Act (the Wilson Committee). In 1978 the LSG submitted a paper on charging for services for the green paper on financing public library services. In 1994 it made representations to the governments review of the public library service in England and Wales and its proposals for the contracting out of public services. It also voiced its concern at the local government reorganisation proposals in the mid 1990s with the adverse effect that smaller authorities might bring to specialist services. In 2002 there was LSG representation on the CILIP group who responded to the consultation on revised conditions of access to electoral registers and there are many other examples of lobbying by members of the LSG committee.

Standards and guidelines

A sub-committee on this topic was convened under the leadership of Harold Nichols as early as 1977 (N1:1) but seems to have made little progress. It was re-convened by Diana Winterbotham in 1985 and draft standards were presented to the LSG Committee in October 1986. They were discussed at a meeting in Preston which was attended by 35 people and further comments were invited. The final draft was submitted to the LA in 1988, they were agreed in 1989 and published in 1990 as an A5 booklet. They were well received. In 1989 a survey on local studies provision had been commissioned by the LSG and the results, analysed by Diana Winterbotham, were published in 1990 (LSL 9:1). By 1996 it was clear that there had been so many changes in the library world since the draft of the first edition had been prepared that a revised version was called for. A working party under the leadership of Don Martin was set up and the first draft, which was closely based on the first edition with provision for IT developments was submitted to the LA in 1998: it was referred back for rewriting as it was felt that it did not do justice to the innovative and dynamic work of local studies libraries and it also suffered from having been drawn up just before the appearance of *The new library: the peoples network* (1997) and other significant reports. Such aspects as new technology, social inclusion and promotion were then highlighted in a section called "New horizons" and the draft resubmitted. Ironically the fact that these had been isolated from the mainstream of the work was now the subject of criticism, the world of local studies librarianship had been moving so fast that some of these horizons were already no longer new. The LA was supportive and helpful and the document which was finally published in 2002 was all the better for the blood, sweat and tears, and a great credit to the devoted work of Don Martin.

Regional bibliographies

This was an early interest of the LSG and in 1978 the examples of Kent and the East Midlands were held up as examples of good practice (N1:2). In 1983 Paul Sturges contributed an article on the subject to LSL which provoked a response from those involved in bibliographies for Essex and Kent (LSL 3:1). It was recognised that local collections contained much that was not represented in national libraries and the LSG encouraged participation in national bibliographical initiatives such as the Eighteenth century Short Title Catalogue - now the English Short Title Catalogue (LSL 3:1). The involvement of local studies librarians in regional bibliographical work meant that the LSG was represented on a British Library project to investigate the legal deposit of local publications in 1999.

Working parties

On occasion the LSG has set up its own working groups to deal with burning issues. In 1978 such a group was set up on ephemera (N2:1) following a meeting held in 1977 to receive the preliminary report of the Advisory Committee on Ephemera and Minor Publications. In 1981 the LSG participated in a working party on archives policy for libraries, museums and record offices which resulted in a joint statement being issued. More often however the LSG has been represented on a range of other bodies, for example the British Library Consultative Group on Newspapers on which it has served since 1983, first by Frank Manders and since 1991 by Elizabeth Melrose: the latter has also been Chair of the LINC Newsplan Committee and now its successor, the UK and Ireland Newsplan Committee. Other bodies similarly supported are the Standing Conference on Archives and Museums, the Black and Asian Studies Association, the British Book Trade Index Advisory Committee and BRICMICS, a body made up of map curators acting as a lobby group for libraries to the Ordnance Survey.

Branches

The establishment of branches or sub-groups was approved in 1978 and a number of regional or national branches were established during the 1980s. The **Scottish branch** was established in 1980, the first of our branches and always one of the most active. For many years it has been a key player in the Scottish local history week, which has taken place regularly since 1988, and its newsletter *Locscot* which has appeared since 1982 often rivals the *Local studies librarian* in size. The **North West branch** was established in 1981. Among its achievements has been the publication in 1987 of *Sure coffers: sources for the history of religion in the North West*. In 1995 it undertook a survey of spending cuts in the region. Its *Newsletter* has appeared since 2001. The **London and Home Counties branch** was established in 1983. It has maintained an active programme and has published its *Newsletter* since 1986. The **Eastern branch** was established in 1985: it became dormant in the 1990s and reformed as the **Midlands and Anglia** in 1998. This has been more successful with 300 members in 2000. The **Welsh branch**, our most recent branch, was established in 1988, and also publishes its own *Newsletter*. Between them the branches have contributed greatly to the development of local studies staff across the country, organising day schools on a wide range of topics as well as visits to libraries and other relevant resource collections. The branch reports always form one of the most substantial sections of the LSG Committee meetings.

Conferences

The LSG fulfils much of its function of educating and informing local studies staff through an active programme of involvement in conferences and meetings. This has been the case since its earliest days when it participated in the LA national conferences. In 1979 (Sep 11-14) the LA Study School and National Conference was held at Nottingham, a marathon event lasting four days, including LSG sessions on local collections in university libraries, oral history and conservation (N 3:1). In 1981 (Sep 14-18) the LA National Conference and Exhibition at Cliftonville rivalled this with eight sessions on the overall conference theme of "Learning through life" and the papers were published in *LAR* Oct 1981.

The group has been involved in all the series of UmbrellA conferences which have taken place in alternate years over a period of two to three days, usually in June or July. The first was in Leeds in 1971: the others have all been held at UMIST in Manchester. Each of our programmes has had an underlying theme, including Local but not parochial; Local collections, local pride; The graphic image, Aspects of popular culture; and Social inclusion. There have been several joint sessions with other Groups over the years. Many of the LSG papers from Umbrella have been published in *The Local Studies Librarian* and have thus reached a wider range of members than the relatively small number who were able to attend the sessions themselves. The Group plans to continue its active involvement in Umbrella 2003 and Umbrella 2005.

The LSG has also had active involvement in the Libtech event held at Hatfield. In 1990 it hosted a session on information and data retrieval for local studies which featured the East Yorkshire Bibliography and Scotloc. In 1995 it held a seminar on the Gateshead 1900 and Durham Record projects and in 1996 it dealt with community information on the internet.

Day and weekend schools

Our own weekend schools have had a mixed success. As with the major conferences, local studies staff are often at the end of the line when it is a question of employers funding their training by underwriting their attendance. Schools ran in different parts of the country in various years from 1978 to 1990, with gradually diminishing attendances. Themes included publishing, new technology, education and media. The day schools, which are normally organised by branches and, in regions like the South West where there is no branch, by other groups such as the ISG, have normally been more successful than the residential courses and again papers often appear in *LSL*, as for example in the case of the day school on marketing organised by the Midlands and Anglia Branch on 19 May 1999 (*LSL* 19:1).

Awards

The LSG seeks to encourage high standards in local studies librarianship and participates in several award schemes to recognise good practice.

- The **Dorothy McCulla Award** is the Group's own award and the winner is now often referred to as the local studies librarian of the year. It was inaugurated in 1981 in memory of the founder of the LSG. Nominations are sought each year for a member of the Group who has made an outstanding contribution to local studies work. The panel look in particular for good overall service provision, innovation and promotional work and the winner receives a cash award and a hand-written

certificate. The winners have come from a wide range of libraries and they have shown a wide range of initiatives and services. The first winner was Diana Winterbotham of Lancashire Libraries and that in our jubilee year was Marilyn Higson from Telford and Wrekin, an authority which did not even exist when the Award was inaugurated.

- **The Alan Ball Awards** encourage local history publication by public libraries and local authorities and are organised by the Library Services Trust. Bernard Nurse has been the LSG representative on the panel since this award was inaugurated in 1985. Originally two awards were made, one for the author and the other for book production: now up to three general awards are made to the publishers, and there are often Commendations as well.

Members of the LSG have also won a series of other awards in which the Group is not a prime mover. A few examples must suffice: in 1990 the National Preservation Office and the Riley, Dunn and Wilson conservation competition was won by Thea Randall and Pauline Thompson. In the same year the LA/T.C.Farries public relations and publicity award won by Mike Petty of Cambridgeshire. In 2000 Public Library Entrepreneur of the Year Award was won by Mike Spick for his interactive CD entitled The Sheffield Time Machine. There is also a crop of MBEs and similar honours won by LSG members such as Diana Winterbotham and Mike Petty and several members of the Group were awarded Centenary Medals in 1998.

Relations with the Media

The LSG has long recognised the important role that the media can play in educating about local studies and has encouraged participation in a range of initiatives. In 1981 following the Granada TV "Pictures of the past" project, the resulting photographs were distributed by LSG. Perhaps the first major series on local history was the BBCs "History on your doorstep" in 1982, and the LSG arranged for a speaker on the programme at the LA Conference in 1981 (LSL 3:2). During the 1986 Domesday 900 celebrations, which produced the innovative laserdisc - a sad example of the impermanence of digital media - the LSG organised a number of linked meetings (LSL 5:1). Similar encouragement has been given to the BBCs History 2000 initiative and the work of the History Channel.

International links

The active programme of international links shows the importance of being local but not parochial and the exchange of ideas has certainly been a two-way traffic. The programme began in the late 1980s when correspondence with Spain in 1989 resulted in Spanish participation in Umbrella in 1991. Also in 1989, following the Hampshire-Normandy accord, Alain Girard of Caen Municipal Library spoke to London & Home Counties Branch on local studies in France (LSL 12:2). In 1993 a formal international policy was drawn up (LSL 12:2): in the same year the Group supported Andrei Masevitch, a visiting librarian from St Petersburg, and Erzsébet Gancs from Győr, Hungary, spoke at Umbrella in Manchester. In fact Hungary has led the international programme of the Group, partly because of the great enthusiasm in that country. In 1994 Elizabeth Melrose spoke at the 26th conference of Hungarian Librarians in Körmend (LSL 13:2). The following year Ian Maxted spoke at the 2nd Hungarian LSG conference in Sopron (LSL 14:2) and in 1996 Penny Ward spoke at

the 3rd Conference in Tata (LSL 15:2). Others who have benefited from Hungarian hospitality, which normally includes a study tour of libraries in Hungary, are Diana Dixon who spoke at 5th Conference at Kiskunhalas in 1998 (LSL 17:2) and Mick Scott who spoke at the 7th Conference at Sekesfőhérvár in 2000 (LSL 19:2). The success of these initiatives are largely due to the personal enthusiasm of Elizabeth Melrose, who maintains extensive contacts with several countries, including Romania (LSL 14:2) and Latvia. In 1996 she attended a Latvian conference of local studies librarians (LSL 15:2).

Website

This is one of the most recent initiatives of the LSG. During 2001 Linda Greenwood, the LSG representative from Northern Ireland worked with a designer to produce a website for the Group. The result, after much badgering to obtain the desired design, contains information on the current committee, events, publications and other matters. It will increasingly provide an important channel through which the work of the Group can reach members and the wider world.

Conclusion

Any organisation is made up of its members and it is a very positive reflection on the enthusiasm and activity across the country that a large part of the LSGs role has not only been to initiate but also to publicise, encourage and codify work being undertaken by others. Over the past quarter century in fact the rest of the world has been progressively waking up to what local studies staff have been doing, too quietly perhaps, since well before the group was established. We have always known that we were acting in the role of the British Library for the area we served - now the concept of the distributed national collection has emerged, with local studies librarians key players. We have always been aware of the importance of local and family history in motivating individuals of all ages and backgrounds to undertake personally relevant research - now the concept of life-long learning is with us. In our collections we have always sought, with varying degrees of success, to reflect all aspects of the community we serve - now the concepts of social inclusion and cultural diversity have been articulated. From being an isolated and marginalised part of the library service, often seen as dusty and elitist, the LSG has helped local studies to emerge as one of the key elements in information provision and a leading library player in the heritage team of the museums, archives and libraries sector. A key function of the LSG in the coming years will be to see that local studies staff are supported in maintaining this central role.

Ian Maxted is Chairman of LSG and Local Studies Librarian, Devon Libraries

PEAKLAND HERITAGE

Ruth Gordon

We all have dreams of what we could do to make our resources more accessible, more child-friendly....if only we had the staff and the money. In 2002 one of my dreams came true: here's how.

Who, What, When?

Peakland Heritage is a web-based learning resource focusing on the history of the Peak District, before the creation, in 1951, of the National Park. It was created by Derbyshire County Council's Libraries & Heritage Department in partnership with the Peak District National Park Authority and funded by the British Library Cooperation and Partnership Programme plus Resource. The project was put together and delivered at breakneck speed to fit in with the Funder's timescale. Planning began in December 2000 and the proposal was submitted for 9 January 2001; it received approval in May and was completed for launch on 20 March 2002. New material continues to be added daily.

Why the Peak District?

The Peak District National Park is the oldest National Park in England, and celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2001. One third of Britain's population lives within an hour of its boundaries but for its residents there are few local facilities in the scattered villages and hamlets. Served mainly by mobile libraries it is difficult to deliver quality Local Studies services in the traditional ways: there is a need, therefore, for local people to have remote access to heritage materials.

Over 22 million visitors a year make it the second most visited national park in the world. School and student groups from all over the country visit and use the area for educational project work. They too have a need for remote access to historical information on the area.

Aims of Peakland Heritage

- To tell the story of the Peak in a manner accessible to older school children and life-long learners.
- To provide remote access to selected primary source material and promote awareness of further resources held in the partners' libraries, archives and museums.
- To encourage contributions from other information providers: independent museums, local historical societies and a number of private individuals have all contributed material to the site.

How does it work?

There are three aspects to the learning resource:

- An easily navigable, topic based history of the area. This includes extracts from primary sources and reminiscences of local people, linked by new writing commissioned for the project.

- A strong visual element with digitised images displayed in galleries and used to illustrate the text. These include early engravings, paintings, photographs old and new, plus modern artwork.
- A Peak District bibliography, searchable by author, title and key word, based on the stock of the Local Studies Library, County Hall, Matlock plus rare items held at the British Library. It is regularly updated to include relevant new material.

How was it financed?

We received a grant of £35,900 from the British Library Cooperation and Partnership Programme, including assistance from Resource. This paid for:

- A Researcher to identify material suitable for digitisation.
- A Writer to create the modern text. In fact this became two short-term appointments treated as flat fee consultancies.
- A web site designer to create and manage the website. This was put out to tender and the contract was awarded to Northcliffe Electronic Publishing.
- Photography and scanning of images by BL Reprographics, local photographers and scanning services.
- A Web Server. By agreement, this funding was used to finance a 5-year hosting contract instead.

Matching funding from the partners provided:

- Office facilities and equipment including a new laptop computer.
- Staff time for text processing and project management.

How was it achieved?

- A committee representing all the partners, the researcher, writer and web site designer met three times to brainstorm the project. Thereafter Project coordination was delegated to the Local Studies Development Librarian and contact between the team was maintained by email.
- A focus group of teachers, an education advisor, plus parents and children was consulted at key points throughout the project.
- Derbyshire Libraries Local Studies and Word Processing teams gave the project priority in the key period of December 2001 to March 2002.
- Northcliffe Electronic Publishing took responsibility for uploading content to the site, prior to the launch. Text was submitted by email and the images on CDs. This freed library staff for content creation and editorial work.

Keys to success.

The people

Everyone involved believed in the project and gave it their all.

The project demanded a wholehearted team effort on the part of all Derbyshire Libraries and Heritage staff involved. Most of the work fell on the County Hall Local Studies and Word Processing teams and required major adjustments to normal working patterns. For the Local Studies Team it dominated activities for around eight months and the after effects of such a single minded campaign are still with us in the form of many backlogs of ordinary tasks that are slowly being pulled back into line.

We were exceptionally lucky in the people we appointed as Writer and Researcher. They both worked far in excess of their contracts because they identified so strongly with the aims of the project. In fact they are continuing to feed in new material from time to time.

Northcliffe Electronic Publishing took great pains to get the design right and willingly committed all the staff time needed to load up the site and deliver on time. Equally important to a Project Manager with no previous experience of putting together a website, they were kind and supportive, patient with endless questions and generally a pleasure to work with.

Finding reliable, locally based photographers/scanners who could deliver both quantity and quality and guarantee care for irreplaceable items was a major concern. Fortunately, the people we eventually chose performed very well on all these fronts.

Promotion

Good use of publicity through press releases and local radio aroused interest and brought offers of help from the wider community. I loved the headline: "Weaving a magic web of history." From where I stood, trying to make it all come together, the effect was more like some devilish Fair Isle knitting, trying to draw all the different balls of wool into a pattern I could not yet quite visualize.

Administration

The reporting and administration process required by British Library was straightforward and geared to helping us complete the project on time. All queries relating to the grant received clear and speedy responses that enabled us to progress without delay.

Outcomes.

Peakland Heritage has revolutionised the delivery of Local Studies resources into Derbyshire Libraries and out into the wider world.

The site is exceptionally easy to navigate - it was Highly Commended in this year's National Media Award for best designed web site and nominated for the International Visual Communications Association Biz-net Awards. It is also very easy to amend and update, as most alterations and additions can be made by Local Studies staff. Each month we receive informative statistics on use to assist and inform future developments. By the end of our first year almost 150,000 pages have been viewed and business is steadily improving: April 2003 brought our best month yet with 5,300 separate visits to the site.

We have had a lot of positive feedback from users locally and worldwide and frequent offers of new material from individuals and organisations. We have also had corrections and complaints. In fact, although initially distressing, these have turned out to be, without exception, very positive experiences that have led to new information being offered to enrich the site.

For me, as Project Manager it has been an amazing experience. I still feel I have somehow had a year surgically extracted from my life - but I have gained so much:

new skills, new visions for Local Studies service delivery combined with a "back to basics" renewal of contact with the core source materials.

Lessons Learned.

Focus.

The geographical area, time and subject range was very broad. It was hard to do justice to the wealth of information. A narrower focus with more depth would have made it easier to serve a varied community of learners from primary school to post graduate.

Timescale.

Unforeseeable changes in the Local Authority committee structure led to delays in advertising posts and putting out the tender. Future projects should plan to make maximum use of any enforced waiting time. We used the time to select books to go on the bibliographic database. With hindsight, it would have been better to select and prepare input documents for images so that scanning of images could have begun much earlier.

Loading and organizing the content of a web site, making hyperlinks and so on is very time consuming. When stating numbers of items to be digitised in the project proposal we were over-optimistic through ignorance of the real time issues involved. A realistic timescale would have launched a taster site in March followed by a period of evaluation, with completion scheduled for Autumn 2002

Moving the Goalposts

We decided it would be better to outsource web site maintenance through a hosting contract rather than to buy a server that would need to be maintained by a hard pressed Local Authority IT Department.

Short term posts (30 to 40 days on this project) take too long to fill using the traditional methods of appointment. Consultancy, or secondment plus use of relief staffing will get people into posts more quickly.

The British Library readily agreed to these variations from the original proposal.

Want to know more?

Visit the site at www.peaklandheritage.org.uk

Visit www.bl.uk/concord for the interim and final reports on the project.

Contact: if you would like more information about Peakland Heritage contact the author, Ruth Gordon, Local Studies Development Librarian, Derbyshire Libraries & Heritage Department at ruth.gordon@derbyshire.gov.uk or telephone 01629 580000 extension 6580.

Ruth Gordon is Local Studies Development Officer, Derbyshire Libraries

LOCAL STUDIES LIBRARY SERVICES IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Yvonne Hirst

Northern Ireland differs from the rest of the UK in that only five library services cover the whole of the Province, there being five Education and Library Boards, each covering a geographical area. These were set up in 1973 as part of a general reorganisation of local government and were run by the Department of Education for Northern Ireland. The Board areas were: the Western, North-Eastern, Belfast, South and South-Eastern regions. Whilst the Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB) has an urban based clientele in the main, the other four Boards cater for a mixture of urban and rural needs. In 1999, with the advent of devolved government, public libraries became the responsibility of the Department of Culture and Leisure and the ensuing years have witnessed a time of change and challenge for all library services. There is a Library and Information Services Council for Northern Ireland and this has a Local History Panel.

Board local studies services

Each of the five Education and Library Board's Library Services maintains a Local Studies Service but, due to a combination of varying historical circumstances and geographic and demographic developments, the Local Studies policies, purchasing remits, range of resources and staffing levels are not uniform across the region.

Collections

All five Services maintain and develop a core collection of publications and resources reflecting the interests, needs and history of the immediate locality. These core collections are augmented to a greater or lesser degree by material of a general Irish/Northern Irish nature. These and other differences listed below are reflected in the variety of titles given to the Local Studies Departments and staff members.

Access to the collections

Public access to the Local Studies Collections varies from open access, six days per week including evening opening to restricted/appointment only access. Local Studies Collections are, by and large, for consultation only but all Services try to facilitate research by searching for and recalling lending copies when available.

Services to Local Libraries

Each Local Studies Service provides specialist advice and resources to its local libraries and other library staff. Items are supplied in response to subject queries and requests for specific titles. Display material to celebrate local and national events in the form of, for example, topic packs and photocopies taken from local newspapers will be accumulated and presented to support events in the branch library. Some Services offer training awareness sessions and workshops for interested staff members. Small collections of books and resources relevant to the immediate locality of the library are purchased by the Local Studies Librarian and are held as reference items to ensure the visitor to that library will always find some information on the history, development and culture of the area readily available.

Special Collections

The five services all hold a range of special collections. In general this material will be for consultation only and will remain in the Local Studies Department. As a result of a co-operative project led by Queen's University Belfast, the Local Studies Services have provided information that has been entered on a new on-line database, Research and Special Collections Available Locally (Northern Ireland), "RASCAL" (www.rascal.ac.uk). This database was launched in the Summer of 2002 and has already proved a useful tool for the academic researcher and local historian alike: someone visiting the town of Ballymoney in County Antrim or undertaking a project on the history of the area, for example, will be able to key in the name of the town and a list of special collections along with detailed descriptions and links to relevant sites will appear on screen.

Indexing

Indexing of local newspapers and journals is carried out across the five Services – the NEELB, for example indexes some seventeen weekly newspapers. Some indexing is keyed in directly onto a database and it is hoped that developments in the Electronic Project for Libraries (Northern Ireland) will facilitate a growth in on-line indexing. Guidelines for indexing were produced by members of the Library and Information Services Council(NI) Local History Panel in 1997. Catalogues and indexes listing holdings of local interest have been published by some of the Local Studies Services – BELB's "Special Collections" and the SEELB's "The Spirit of the North is High" are two examples.

Services to the family historian

Genealogical queries pose particular challenges for the Local Studies Librarian in Northern Ireland (other than the perennial ones of demands on staff time!). A combination of factors means that we may not match the high expectations some of our clients may have. Many of the important primary records were destroyed during the civil wars in Ireland in the early years of the Twentieth Century and remaining records are held in the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland and in the National Archive, Dublin. Local Studies Services hold copies of some of the remaining resources. Having said this, all five Services aim to be as helpful as possible by assisting readers to search such records as the Griffith's Valuation (a Nineteenth Century listing of households compiled for the purposes of taxation), old maps, the 1901 Census and the Ulster American Folk Park's Emigration Database. Clients will be offered general advice on family research and referred on to other agencies when this is appropriate. When all else fails, staff take pride in providing a wealth of information aimed at providing "a sense of place". The small land division, the "townland", is the key to almost all family research in Ireland and, if this area can be identified, then we should be able to provide maps, photographs, histories, Local Study packs, listings from Griffith's Valuation of 1862, the 1901 Census and relevant directories. Armed with these details, our client may be able to visit the area and, perhaps, locate the exact plot of land owned or rented by his ancestor – we can provide that "sense of place". The Local Studies Services boast that such a breadth of information cannot be found in any other single location or service.

At a recent seminar run in September 2002 by the Library and Information Services Council (NI) Local History Panel on the subject of library services to the family historian, the above problems and strengths were discussed and it was recognised

that there was a need for Northern Ireland to establish a central agency to direct and advise the visiting genealogist – see below.

Local Societies and groups

Local Studies services in Northern Ireland have a history of encouraging and working with Local Historical Groups and Family History Societies. Help to further research is offered, talks and workshops are given and financial support for publications is available. In Northern Ireland, in particular, where published records and information may be minimal, we have often to rely on local knowledge so, by establishing good working relationships with these groups, we work to the benefit of ourselves, the groups and our clients. The umbrella organisation for local studies groups in Northern Ireland, the Federation for Ulster Local Studies, is represented on the LISC(NI) Local History Panel and Local Studies library staff are in contact with the organisation on a regular basis for help and advice.

The LISC(NI) Local History Panel

Local Studies Librarians from each of the Boards sit on the LISC(NI) Local History Panel (www.liscni.co.uk). This group meets four times a year and has a broad membership base. As well as Local Study Departments, museums, university libraries, the Public Record Officer, the Federation for Ulster Local Studies, the Linen Hall Library and Government Libraries are represented. The Panel furthers co-operation along formal and informal lines between these agencies: knowledge is pooled, advice sought, complaints aired and, hopefully, horizons broadened! One of the Local Studies Librarians sitting on this Panel attends the CILIP Local Studies Group as a co-opted member (current representative: Yvonne Hirst, Local Studies Development Officer for the NEELB).

Examples of some of the co-operative projects undertaken by the Panel are:

Publications

- "Northern Ireland Newspapers 1737 – 1987" – a forerunner to the 1992 edition of "Newsplan: Ireland".
- "Guidelines for Indexing Newspapers" – 1997.
- "A Directory of Directories" – ongoing.

Special events

- Local History Week (held every other year) – the LISC Local History Panel plans themes, co-ordinates Province-wide publicity, runs a seminar open to professional and interested groups.
- Runs an annual seminar on topics such as oral history and services to the genealogist.

Support for the development of new projects and resources

- Centre for Migration Studies Emigration Database – on-line access to the database is provided via the five Local Studies Departments as well as the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum in County Tyrone.
- NIPR (Northern Ireland Publications Resource) – Local Studies Services provide information regarding new, locally published material to be added to the on-line database (www.nibooks.org).

- RASCAL (Research and Special Collections Available Locally) – Local Studies Services have supplied detailed descriptions of their special collections for adding to this on-line database (www.rascal.ac.uk).
- Newsplan – funding from the British Library for the preservation of important newspapers not currently available on microfilm has been made available and Local Studies Librarians have identified such items and are facilitating work on this material.

Workshops/Visits

Staff awareness sessions at such venues as the Stormont Library, PRONI and the Linen Hall Library are encouraged and promoted by the Panel.

Displays

Major displays such as the “Act of Union Bicentenary” and “Ulster Placenames” are facilitated by Panel members.

Future developments

The major challenge and change all Library Services in Northern Ireland face is the realisation of the Electronic Libraries for Northern Ireland (EL/NI) project, a Public Finance Initiative which will roll out the People’s Network in Northern Ireland. One of the most important results of this project will be the introduction of a single, on-line catalogue for all five library services which will be available through a new Northern Ireland Libraries Portal Website (www.ni-libraries.net). The provision of this new catalogue poses particular problems for the Local Studies Services as five different classification systems ranging from the highly specialised system used in the NEELB to systems using straight Dewey are in use currently. Staff concerns about the possibility of the new system having detrimental effects on the level of our services to readers are being addressed through various working parties.

The Northern Ireland Libraries Portal Website, which is still under development, will provide links to the individual Board websites and pages are being set aside for information about special collections, projects and the presentation of digitised resources. The logistics and methodology of adding information and resources to this portal site are still being worked out but Local Studies Librarians have already been asked to edit existing lists of “favourite” websites for inclusion onto the site. Amey, the private company supplying the new services, has two years to make a business case for running genealogical research as a charged service. Such a development would, of course, have implications for the role of Local Studies staff and our readers’ perception of the Service.

At a recent LISC(NI) Local History Panel Seminar, the speaker, Brian Mitchell of the Derry Centre of Irish Genealogy, led a discussion about the problems faced by librarians when trying to help clients. Mr Mitchell spoke about plans backed by government to develop a “one-stop shop” aimed at advising the family researcher regarding what resources are available and where to go to access them.

In recognition of government policies aimed at social inclusivity, Local Studies Librarians are taking into account the necessity to, for example, purchase publications in the Irish language and material examining the Ulster/Scots movement.

Conclusion

As is the case for all those involved in public services, staff working in Local Studies Departments are faced with a time of change and challenge: the nature of jobs is altering, responsibilities are shifting, the expectations of our clients are higher and the unique nature of many of our resources is called into question by the growing availability of information via electronic media. The libraries and Local Study Departments in Northern Ireland have a proud tradition of maintaining the neutral persona of our services: all cultures and heritages are recognised as having validity and importance for the communities we serve. Local Studies librarians recognise the vital part we have to play in the conservation and presentation of the resources that examine our communities' traditions and are ready to maintain, defend and develop our services to meet the challenges.

Yvonne Hirst is Local Studies Development Officer, North Eastern Education and Library Board. As the LISC(NI) Local History Panel representative to LSG, she can be contacted at Yvonne.hirst@ni-libraries.net

FROM OUR SUBGROUPS

LOCSCOT, our Scottish sub-group, reports that *Locscot Magazine* has re-established itself with two recent issues under the editorship of Ann Nix of Edinburgh City Libraries and Sybil Cavanagh of West Lothian Libraries. Also reported are two meetings producing excellent discussions, though with moderate attendance: these were the AGM in March and a joint meeting with the Cataloguing and Indexing Group in Scotland. Local History Week was widely supported: the theme this year was Library History, as part of the celebrations of 150 years of Scottish library legislation. The theme for the 2004 Local History Week - 'Graveyards' - has already been chosen, and *LOCSCOT* will hold a day school on the subject in the autumn to get things going.

Northern Ireland is also looking forward to their next country-wide local history event, this time in 2005. A working Group of the LISC(NI) Local History Panel has been set up, and it is envisaged that there will be activities each month with the general theme of 'celebrating local history', starting and ending the year with two major banner events. The idea is to take pressure off local studies staff in one particular Week, and to spread promotion of local studies to the general public throughout the year. The Local History Panel autumn seminar this year will be on 'Copyright and local studies resources' and will be held in Belfast at the Linen Hall Library on September 21st.

The *Midlands and Anglia* sub-group has published its second newsletter, containing a range of short articles. A visit to the British Geological Society at Keyworth had a good attendance and members were able to see some of the archives. The group has decided not to hold any more half-day seminars for the present, as there are problems with organisation and attendance has been moderate. However, the popular annual Day School will be held, with theme of 'New directions in family history': this will be held on October 1st at Nottingham Central Library, and the sub-group's AGM will take place during the day. The sub-group is looking for more volunteers from the West Midlands to serve on the committee, as that part of the region remains under-represented.

The *North West* sub-group continues to flourish, with a very good attendance at their Spring Day School. Planning is going forward for meetings later in the year.

ANNUAL REPORT 2002

The Local Studies Group celebrated its Silver Jubilee with a celebratory meeting on November 4th, 2002. Ian Maxted outlined the history of the group, Diana Dixon talked about local studies literature over the years, and Don Martin discussed the guidelines for local studies. We were delighted to welcome two founder members of the Group to the meeting.

In February, the long awaited *Local studies libraries: guidelines for local studies libraries* were published by Library Association Publishing and the editor was able to present them to the IFLA Standing Committee on Genealogy and Local History in Glasgow. We also promoted them on our stand in the IFLA exhibition and they attracted considerable interest.

As usual our regional sections have been highly active organising meetings. For instance, Midland and Anglia held a very successful meeting on 'Social Inclusion' at Alfreton in September and one on 'Preservation' in May in Norwich; London and Home Counties participated in the 'London Maze' in March. North West organised a visit to Fulwood Barracks and Regimental Museum in Preston in April, Wales organised a visit to Rhondda Heritage Park, and Scotland participated in Local History Week and also ran a day school on Copyright in October. The Scottish sub-group (LOCSCOT) also published a *Guide to Scottish photographic collections in public libraries in Scotland* and brought out a new issue of LOCSCOT.

We were delighted to award the McCulla prize to Marilyn Higson of Telford for her innovative work at Madeley and we also congratulate Diana Dixon on being awarded an LA Certificate of Merit.

In keeping with our aim of encouraging the discussion of, and promoting interest in, all matters relating to local studies, we have organised meetings throughout the country on topical and relevant subjects and we have communicated with members through the pages of *The Local Studies Librarian*, which appeared twice. We are planning full participation in Umbrella 2003 and are preparing a list of local studies contacts.

Diana Dixon

TREASURERS REPORT

The accompanying Accounts cover the first nine months of LSG as part of CILIP, from April 1st 2002 to the end of the year. Future Accounts will be on an annual calendar basis, as required by CILIP.

We have quite a substantial deficit, totally expected, which merely reflects the extra work LSG has done for our part of the profession in general and for our members in particular.

In the period of these Accounts two thirds only of our annual capitation is shown, the other third having been included in the figures to 31st March 2002. Extraordinary expenditure has been for our successful 25th Anniversary Event in London in November and our representation at IFLA in Glasgow during August.

All the Creditors shown in the Balance Sheet have been paid and most of the money owed by Debtors has been received.

In the Treasurer's view, our current financial position is very satisfactory and the Group can look forward with confidence to the future.

The Accumulated Reserves at the end of 2002 of our sub-groups are as follows and are categorised appropriately:

WELL and HAPPY:	Scottish	£1427
	Midlands & Anglia	£1301
	London & Home Counties	£1012
UNDER OBSERVATION:	Welsh	£697
	North Western	£605
IN INTENSIVE CARE:	None	

Philip Thomas,
Hon. Treasurer.
26th February 2003.

LOCAL STUDIES GROUP of CILIP (Registered Charity no. 313014)

Income and Expenditure Account for the period 1st April 2002 - 31st December 2002

Expenditure	£	Income	£
Nett V.A.T. on Goods and Services	54.09	Capitation	3166.00
LOCAL STUDIES LIBRARIAN (2 issues):			
Printing & Distribution	3140.60		
<u>LESS</u> Advertising, Inserts.			
Subscriptions & Sales <u>428.50</u>	2712.10	LSL Index - Sales	1.00
Main Committee Exes (2 Mtgs)	868.61		
Officers' Exes (at Outside Mtgs)	211.35		
25th Anniversary Event (4th Nov)	835.10	Interest Received:	
Annual General Meeting	46.78	Bank Current a/c	1.10
Stationery & Photocopying	152.85	Charities Deposit.	<u>118.38</u>
Postages, Telephone, Fax & e-mails	150.73		119.48
McCulla Award Prize	100.00		
Bibliography Research Expenses	28.00		
International Relations	29.58		
Representation at IFLA 2002	216.52		
Rebranding & Group Publicity	51.61		
Nett Payments to/for Sub-Groups	159.04		
	<u>£5616.36</u>		<u>£3286.48</u>
		DEFICIT for period, carried down to Balance Sheet	<u>£2329.88</u>
			<u>£5616.36</u>

BALANCE SHEET as at 31st December 2002

<u>LIABILITIES</u>	£	<u>ASSETS</u>	£
Sundry Creditors:		Sundry Debtors:	
Printing Bill for LSL 21/2	1048.00	Local Studies Librarian:	
Scottish Sub-Group (IFLA Fee)	176.25	Advertising, Inserts,	
McCulla Award Prize	<u>100.00</u>	Subscriptions & Sales	1003.00
	1324.25	CILIP - V.A.T. Refund due	<u>228.03</u>
Accumulated, Surplus as at			£1231.03
1st April 2002	5995.91	Balances:	
LESS Deficit, for period, b/d from Income & Expenditure Account	<u>2329.88</u>	Bank Current a/c	418.15
	3666.03	Charities Deposit	<u>3341.10</u>
			3759.25
	<u>£4990.28</u>		<u>£4990.28</u>

P.D. Thomas, Hon. Treasurer.

G.M. Underwood, Hon. Auditor

26th February 2003

FROM OUR CILIP COUNCILLOR: report to the AGM, July 2003

I would like to thank the members of the Local Studies Group for giving me the privilege of representing the interests of the Group on CILIP Council since the new Institute was formed in 2002. Reports of all Council meetings are published in *Update* and on the CILIP website. I have also sent reports both to the Local Studies national committee, the *Local Studies Librarian* and to the Group pages on the CILIP website.

Council has been concerned in the past months with essential new procedures that will allow the Institute to focus on improving communication with its members. New Branch Rules have been adopted. Group Rules are now out for consultation and these were discussed at the national Group committee meeting at the end of June.

The annual return of Group information and activities is expected at the beginning of this month. The Local Studies Group return will give CILIP feedback on its successes and issues faced by the Group and its sub-groups, and the support given by CILIP HQ. In this the Group is fortunate to have Damien McManus as the Group liaison officer.

Other items that have been debated at Council have given me a sense of the overall context in which the Local Studies Group operates. There has been awkward discussion about the Accounts, an analysis of membership trends, and the latest news on the proposed development of the website. Scrutiny of the outline of the CILIP Fundamental Review has brought up twenty-two key topics, which must be prioritised and costed. Here a councillor remarked that one main aim should be to clarify the roles of the Branches and Groups, such as our own. No less important have been the comments from the Rare Book Group, the Northern Branch and myself on your behalf on the proposed closure of York Minster Library. Closure has fortunately been averted after protest that included a letter from CILIP, but it allowed me to speak briefly in Council – a daunting experience with a microphone that was too high for me.

Like all councillors, I also sit on one of the three main CILIP committees and on a supporting Panel – these are the Policy Development Committee and the International Panel. Their meetings are interlinked since the Panel feeds into the Committee which reports to Council. It is also a chance to get to know other professional colleagues and their differing points of view. Here Committee and Panel members have considered the draft code of Ethics, the disbandment of the UK UNESCO Commission, the problems over heritage in Iraq and the announcement of the winner of the Anthony Thompson Travel Award to a community librarian from a South African township.

I hope that this report gives a slight flavour of the Council agenda. As the Local Studies Group representative I can take individual dilemmas to Council – from the Group as a whole or from any one of our members. Please do contact me and I will try to help.

Elizabeth Melrose
tel: 01609 767800

email: elizabeth.melrose@northyorks.gov.uk

LOCAL STUDIES GROUP COMMITTEE 2003

- Chairman: Ian Maxted, Devon County Library
imaxted@devon.gov.uk
- Vice Chairman: Alice Lock, Tameside Libraries
alice.lock@tamelocal.dial.pipex.com
- Hon Secretary: Diana Dixon, Suffolk
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- Hon Treasurer: Philip Thomas, Birmingham
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- Philippa Stevens, Hampshire County Library
philippa.stevens@hants.gov.uk
- Michael Dewe, Aberystwyth (co-opted)
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Representatives of the geographic subgroups:

- London & Home Counties: Mick Scott, Corporation of London
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- Midlands and Anglia: Terry Bracher, Northamptonshire Libraries
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- Scottish: Don Martin, East Dunbartonshire Libraries
don.martin@eastdunbarton.gov.uk
- Welsh: Rheinallt Llwyd, DIS, Univ. Wales, Aberystwyth
rhl@aber.ac.uk
- Northern Ireland: Yvonne Hirst, NEELB, Ballymena
yvonne.hirst@ni-libraries.net

The Group has a Liaison Officer at CILIP to keep us in touch with areas of concern. At present this is Damien McManus (damien.mcmanus@cilip.org.uk), who is therefore an ex-officio member of the Committee.

As the number of candidates did not exceed the number of vacancies, no election was necessary this year.

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 meetings or day schools, workshops etc – or indeed anything you wish to bring to the attention of the Committee – please do not hesitate to contact your nearest Committee member, or the Hon Secretary at 11 Cautley Road, Southwold, Suffolk IP18 6DD, email as above.

FAMILIA IN PERIL

Martin Hayes

Many of you already know of, and use, Familia, the website listing family history sources in UK and Irish public libraries. It was set up by EARL in 1997 and lists the holdings including around 300 contact details for and links to over 180 local authority local studies and reference libraries. It provides a unique national portal for family history, and therefore for Local Studies collections. It is effectively an electronic directory of local studies libraries.

If you haven't used it yet, take a look and make up your own mind on its value. The amount of data under each authority varies considerably, as every contributor can add as much or as little as they wish, but Kent, North Yorkshire and West Sussex, for example, show the potential. Subject to project funding from other bodies, the Family History Task Group also has plans to develop the site, to include:

- digital images of sources
- family history tutorials, suitable for staff training & public use
- a feedback form

With the demise of EARL in 2001, Co-East, the networking consortium of East of England public library authorities, stepped in and has been hosting Familia. The short term funding made available to Co-East has now run out and the Family History Task Group concluded that the only practicable method of raising income for development is by levying a subscription on Familia contributors. In April 2003 every authority was sent an explanatory letter, with an invoice for £100. An e-mailed or postal reminder was sent in June.

We have had a good response to the request for a subscription payment, but need more support! The cost to you is that of an average reference book and is cheaper than any national electronic source. The benefit is immeasurable - within a couple of clicks you will be an expert in the referral of all those genealogical enquiries mistakenly directed to you!

I urge everyone who has not already sanctioned payment to do so, otherwise this valuable asset will be lost.

Martin Hayes is Chair, Family History Task Group.

Contact details: Worthing Library, Richmond Road, Worthing, West Sussex BN11 1HD: tel. 01903 212414, e-mail: martin.hayes@westsussex.gov.uk

ALAN BALL LOCAL HISTORY AWARDS 2003

The Alan Ball Awards were established to encourage local history publishing by Public Libraries and Local Authorities and this is the nineteenth year they have been awarded. Organised by the Library Services Trust, they have become an established part of the library awards scene, and give local studies a welcome amount of publicity, particularly in the winners' home areas. This year the judges made the maximum number of three Awards, and commended a further four publications.

The Awards are:

Derbyshire County Council for *Kinder Scout: Portrait of a Mountain*, edited by Roly Smith. This is a beautifully produced and illustrated work by various hands, dealing with one of the county's most impressive topographical features:

Tameside MBC for *Denton and Dukinfield Halls*, by Michael Nevell and John Walker. This is an attractive and well-researched slim volume, likely to be of great value to students of all ages;

Warrington Borough Council for *A History of Warrington*, by Alan Crosby. This is a substantial volume, the result of considerable research, extremely well produced both textually and graphically.

The Commendations are:

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham for *Archive Photograph Galleries* and *HA2000 – Historical Archives Online*. Two websites:

Nottingham City Council for *Rebels, Riots and Reform*: a multimedia, interactive CD ROM;

City of Westminster for *photoLondon*, a website described as "Gateway to London's photographic collections". It was developed with various partner institutions. (www.photoLondon.org.uk);

City of York for *Imagine York*, a website designed to provide access to 10,000 photographs from the collections held in the city's library service and archives. (www.imagineyork.co.uk).

The judges were particularly delighted that the number of non-print entries had substantially increased this year. While the quality of books submitted meant that none of these non-print items on this occasion could be included in the limited number of Awards, the judges were particularly impressed with the four which were Commended.

Congratulations to all these authorities (and to the authors!).

NOTE: did your authority make an entry this year? If not, why not look at your new publications programme, in any format, and think about it for next year. For more information about the Awards contact Eric Winter at the Trust's office at 7 Ridgmount Street, London WC1 7AE, tel 0207 255 0648, email ericwinter@cillip.org.uk

CILIP's Library History Group has long tried to promote an awareness among librarians of the historical and architectural importance of Britain's older library buildings – and so many of these libraries are of importance as part of local history. A recent report commissioned by the Group points out that despite earlier intentions, no comprehensive survey of older library buildings has ever been undertaken, nor has a complete history of the library as a built form been written. This report assesses the current state of research, including pilot projects in Scotland and Yorkshire and provides some ideas for carrying out such projects. There is a bibliography and list of sources for further information, including useful websites. Most local studies librarians are interested in their local environment and this report is worth looking at. The Group welcomes comments and suggestions, and would be delighted to hear from anyone who might be able to contribute to the project. The Historic Library Buildings Project has a presence on the Library History Group's website, which includes a copy of this report. The URL is <http://www.cilip.org.uk/groups/lhg/welcome.html>.

Quarmby Lawrence, E. CILIP Library History Group, November 2002.

Lawrence Rawsthorne, Head of Libraries for Flintshire, has drawn our attention to the *Biographical Dictionary of Civil Engineers in Great Britain and Ireland*. As many of the most famous of these worked all over the country, there may be a good deal of interest in this work for you. That it is published on behalf of the Institution of Civil Engineers gives an indication of its status. The engineering works covered in the Dictionary are principally: harbours and lighthouses, docks, water supplies to towns, fen drainage and land reclamation, river navigations, canals, roads, bridges and early railways. There is an index and a chronological table listing works and their engineers, so you should be able to find out about local works and people. Maybe at £95.00 for this first volume, covering 1500 – 1830, it is not for your department, but it is worthwhile making a note of it, or perhaps alerting your reference librarian.

Former LSG Committee member Robin Ansell has recently taken up the post of County Local Studies Librarian, Dorset Libraries and Arts Service. This is a newly-created post and he is based at Dorchester Library. His previous post was in Yeovil, where since 1982 he had been Reference Librarian and latterly Team Librarian (Information) for Somerset Libraries. He has several local history publications about the area to his credit.

Warwickshire County Record Office, Priory Park, Cape Road, Warwick CV34 4JS, has recently changed its telephone and fax numbers. The new telephone number is 01926 738959 and the fax number is 01926 738969.

The CD-ROM *Troubled Images: posters and images of the Northern Ireland conflict* from the Linen Hall Library, Belfast, has followed up its success in the Besterman/McColvin awards with the award of the prestigious Christopher Ewart Biggs Literary Prize. This award was instituted by the late Jane Ewart-Biggs in memory of her husband, the British Ambassador to Ireland, who was murdered by the IRA in 1976: its objectives are to promote peace and reconciliation in Ireland, a greater understanding between the peoples of Britain and Ireland, or closer cooperation

between partners of the European Community. Published in 2001, the CD-ROM contains 3,400 images drawn from the Library's unique Political Collection as well as detailed notes and approximately fifty essays on important themes by leading experts in the field, and there are also voice recordings of some of the people who created and used the posters. While it is the CD-ROM which has won the prize, it should be noted that it is part of a larger project which includes a book and an exhibition: the exhibition is at present on tour in the USA and Canada.

The Tameside Image Archive, a collection of over 10,000 historical photographs of the area, was launched on the internet in January. It includes images of local people, places and events from the Local Studies Library in Stalybridge, and has already been well used (www.tameside.gov.uk/history). Tameside also reports the results of its 2002 Family History Award. This year the prize was offered to pupils at local schools doing relevant research: all the winners in fact came from one school, (West Hill School in Stalybridge), where one of the teachers has been running a project entitled 'The Man Behind The Name'. The boys picked names from the Stalybridge War Memorial and researched the lives and early deaths of local men in the First World War. All the projects submitted were excellent examples of historical research using military and family history sources to give a vivid picture of the effects of the war: many of the source materials used came from the Local Studies Library in Stalybridge. The judges were very impressed with all the entries and in the event two prizes and four Certificates of Excellence were awarded.

The first North West Archives Festival is to be held in September. Archives services, libraries, museums and community groups will join together to celebrate the treasures held by archive services in the region and to raise awareness of the role they play in the heritage of the North West. This is a joint project between the North West Regional Archive Council and the North West Museums Libraries and Archives Council. The Festival will take place during 'Archives Awareness Month', which will be run by the National Council on Archives and has the aims of raising the profile of the archive domain among the general public, encouraging new users and changing the image of the archive profession. A Guidance Pack has been produced for the North West Archives Festival: contact Janice Taylor, Archive Development Officer at NWMLAC, Griffin Lodge, Cavendish Place, Blackburn, BB2 2PN. For information about the national Archives Awareness Campaign contact Katie Norgrove at the National Council on Archives, Public Record Office, Ruskin Avenue, Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 4DU, tel 020 8392 5376.

There has been considerable debate recently over the proposed closure of the York Minster Library, along with projected staff redundancies. This concerns the Local Studies Group as the Minster Library holdings of more than 120,000 books and documents include the Saxon York Gospels and unique maps of the Civil War battle of Marston Moor. At the beginning of June, at the instigation of the Library History Group, Bob McKee sent a letter of concern to the authorities at York Minster. Fortunately, on 23rd June The Archbishop of York announced that the library has been saved – but that a Cathedral admission charge will be introduced. Citizens of York will be able to apply for a "free pass"! Protest from all quarters seems to have been successful and it is agreed that "The Chapter...got it wrong".

The eighth Yorkshire Family History Fair took place at the end of June in the Exhibition Centre at York Racecourse. This Fair is one of the best-attended events in the genealogical researcher's calendar. There were buses full of visitors eagerly queueing for entry at least half an hour before opening time looking forward to seeing the 95 societies and local history vendors who were setting out their wares on three floors of the centre. Members of family history societies came from as far afield as Aberdeen, Buckinghamshire, Suffolk, Glamorgan and Glasgow, as well as from more local and regional groups. Chris Makepeace, one-time chairman of LSG, was kept busy on his local history stall specialising in the historic map reproductions published by Alan Godfrey: he was assisted by, among others, another former Chairman of the Group, Elizabeth Melrose. Local and family history seems never to have been more popular.

From Yorkshire again comes the news that, in the radical staff restructure in North Yorkshire Libraries Archives and Arts, a new post of County Project Officer, Local Studies, has been established. This is the first time that North Yorkshire Libraries has had a specific post devoted to the promotion of local studies and liaison with the County Record Office, the Registration Service and the many local history and heritage groups in the county. The first holder of the post is Elizabeth Melrose, who is now LSG's CILIP Council member, and as mentioned above, a former Chairman of the Group.

HAVE YOU SEEN...? Some recent items of interest to local studies librarians

Photographic collections in Scotland's Local studies libraries: mid nineteenth century to mid twentieth century. LOCSCOT, 2002. 68pp. £3.50 inc p&p. ISBN 0 904966 54 2. Available from LOCSCOT at The William Patrick Library, 2 West High Street, Kirkintilloch, Glasgow G66 1AD.

This guide, compiled by Ann Nix from questionnaires sent out to libraries, is intended to help both researchers and local studies library staff to locate photographic collections likely to have material relevant to their work. It concentrates on collections which include significant amounts of material from the first century of photography, and thus is likely to be helpful both to local historians and to those interested in the development of photography. Arrangement is alphabetically by the place where the collection is held. There is then some general information about the library, including address, opening times and access for the disabled, along with acquisition policy, catalogues, copying facilities and a list of publications based on the local collection. Details of individual photographic collections are then given. There is an index of photographers, publishers and local history societies and a general index covering places and subjects. The guide is clearly laid out, and should be useful to librarians and historians both inside and outside Scotland.

Plumb, P. Acid attack! Update, 1(5), Aug 2002, 52-53.

Author discusses the need to preserve our written heritage, using as one of his examples public library local collections. He describes the reasons for deterioration of paper from the mid 1880s onwards and argues that what we need to preserve our

written word is a massive deacidification programme, not digitisation. Only where paper has deteriorated too far to deacidify, the solution of using such formats as microfilming or digitisation should be used, and points out that the costs of these are ten times as high as mass deacidification.

A letter commenting on this article, by Richard Hollis of the Stationery Office, appeared in *Update*, 1(6), Nov 2002, p 27. While not criticising Philip Plumb's call for a deacidification programme, he points out the advantages of digitisation programmes in bringing wider public access via the internet to hitherto rare and inaccessible materials, using TSO's digitisation programme for the London Gazette as an example.

Woods, R. When preserving the past – think of the future. Multimedia Information and Technology, 28(3), August 2002, 71-72.

Discusses the need to consider how information will be stored and accessed both today and in the future: if wrong decisions are made, at worst information can be lost for good, or at best be difficult and expensive to retrieve. The example of the BBC *Domesday Book*, where the system used is now obsolete, is instanced. Various options for preservation, including microfilm, digitisation, hard disk technology and tape technology are suggested, and one conclusion reached is that the importance of some material may need a range of different media to be used for it.

Microfiche: the debate. NIDS Newsletter, 20, Dec 2002, p1. [Editorial]

A short discussion on the relative merits of microfiche and digitisation (remembering of course that NIDS material is on microfiche). Defends the use of photography on the grounds that it reproduces the original visually and allows more browsing, but also that it is low-tech and is not subject to major changes in technology - as long as institutions hang on to their microfiche readers. Concludes that there is a place for both microfiche and digitisation – each is a specific tool for a specific job.

Images of England, Issue 8, Spring 2003, published by the National Monuments Record, focuses on some of the ways in which the website is being used. There are short items on using it for family history research, and on its use in searching for local history generally using various criteria such as, among others, location, building type and 'Associated People'. There is also a note on how important volunteer photographers are to the project. This newsletter always carries interesting items. If you don't see it already it is worth doing so: contact Alexandra Saxon at Images of England, English Heritage, NMRC, Kemble Drive, Swindon, SN2 2GZ. Tel 01973 414779, email ioenquiry@english-heritage.org.uk

Hudson, R. Uncovering your past. Sunday Times, Culture, June 8, 2003, pp49-50. Even the Sunday Times has recognised the huge interest in family history. In *Doors* (its Internet section, inside the Culture section of the paper), this article explains how the internet 'gives sleuths easy access to dusty records'. It is a straightforward introduction, listing some useful sites, with some comments and warnings. It might be useful to show some of your absolute beginners.

Local Studies Collection Management, ed. Michael Dewe. Ashgate, 2002. 208pp. £45.00. ISBN 0 566 08365 5.

Michael Dewe has already produced a two-volume manual on local studies librarianship. This, however, is a completely new work. In nine chapters the book provides an overview of current local studies librarianship, with practical advice on various aspects of local studies work, including collection management and developing areas such as digitisation and the worldwide web. Apart from the editor, who also contributes three chapters, there are six other expert contributors. Work being done both in Britain and overseas is covered, and each chapter includes a list of further readings. We hope to have a full review in the Winter issue.

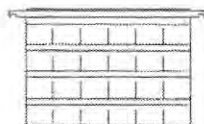
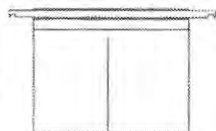
LOCAL STUDIES LIBRARIAN OF THE YEAR 2003

Do you know anyone who is doing outstanding work in local studies librarianship? Nominations may still be made for the 2003 Dorothy McCulla Award, which recognises excellent work of any kind by local studies librarians: previous winners have received their award for such things as setting up a service in a new authority; establishing a local studies database; all-round promotion of a local studies service; successful use of IT; and for publications for local studies librarians.

There are many librarians doing excellent work in the local studies field. Why not nominate someone who you think fits the specification? Remember, however, that your nominee must be a member of LSG. For an information pack contact our Hon. Secretary, Diana Dixon. The closing date for nominations is **September 30**.

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