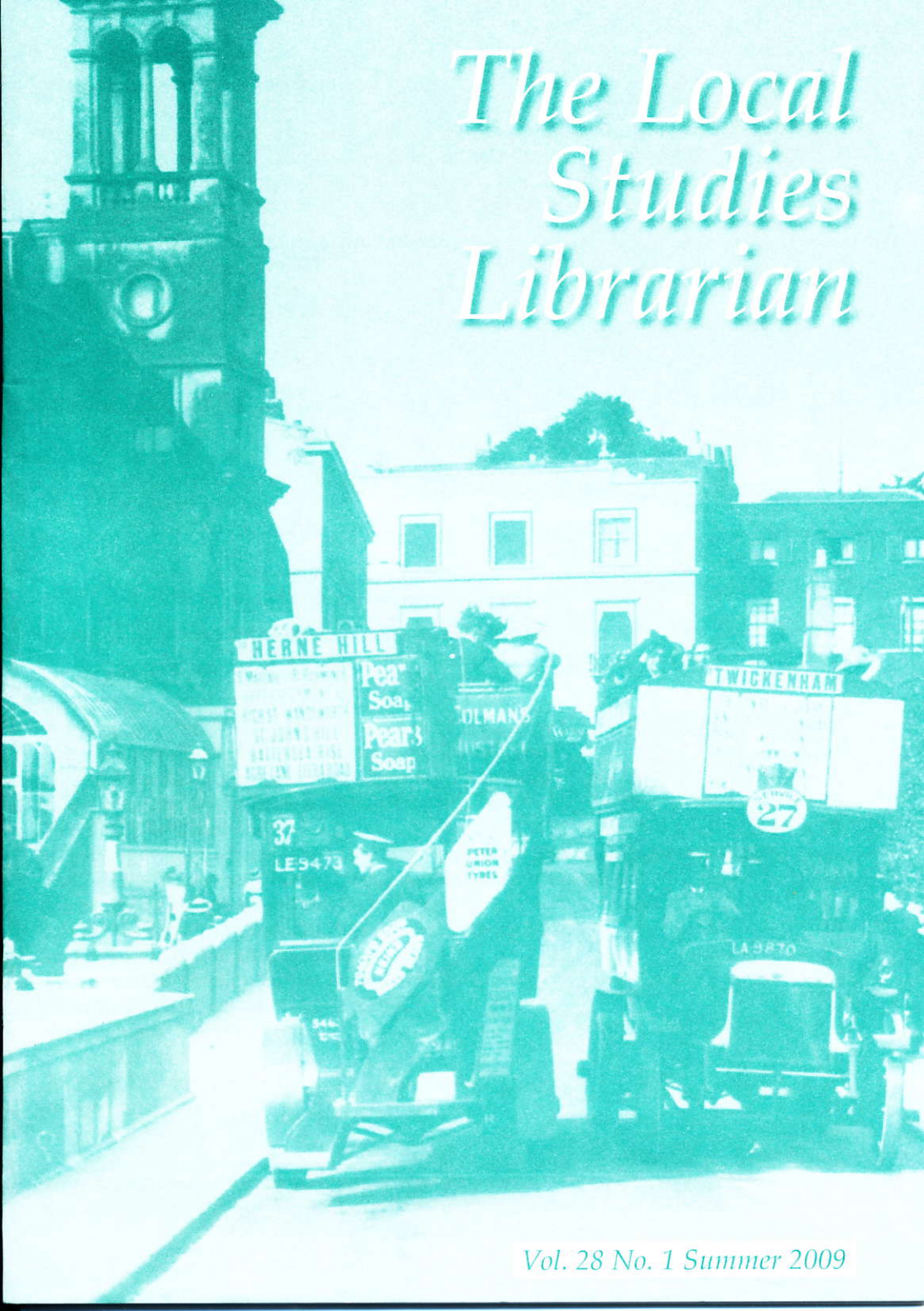


The Local Studies Librarian



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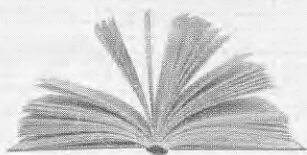
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CONTENTS:

Editorial	1
Turning the Pages in Newcastle: Looking Forward to Newcastle's Past	2
Caribbean Family History at Solihull Central Library	5
Beating the Crunch: Report of a Course in The North East	8
Local Studies Group Aims and Objectives	10
Reaching New Audiences	11
Engaging Communities: The Local Studies Group National Conference 2009	12
Battles Battalions and Papers: Access to Military Records	14
Local Studies Librarian of the Year 2009	17
Local Studies Group Annual Report and Accounts 2008	17
Local Studies Group Committee 2009	21
From our Cilip Policy Forum Representative	22
Alan Ball Local History Awards 2008	23
Forthcoming Events	24
From Our Sub-groups	25
Michael D Dewe 1940-2008 / Help Wanted	26
Notes and News	27
Have you seen?	27

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EDITORIAL

Our Group has been active this year. Although we were not at Umbrella (for the first time) the Group organised a very successful Conference in June, with a attendance of fifty delegates. A report appears in this issue. In addition the new subgroup for the South of England held its first day school, and LocScot continued its regular series of such schools as well as being responsible for Scottish Local History Week, which successfully took place in April. The Midlands and Anglia and North West subgroups have announced programmes for their one-day events. In the North East of England, although there is no subgroup, LSG Committee member Anne Sharp organised a successful meeting in South Shields. Now that the library schools have largely abandoned local history librarianship, professional courses such as these are the way forward for many staff, and we hope you support them.

The Group has also, in a time of financial stringency, been considering other ways forward. We would like to know your reactions to electronic publication for *The Local Studies Librarian*, although there is no immediate suggestion that the printed version be discontinued – we know that many people like the feel of hard copy, or do not have easy access to electronic sources. Please contact our Secretary with your views.

The Committee has revised the Group's 'Aims and Objectives' to take account of modern systems and practices and presented the draft document at the AGM at Kew. Some relevant comments were made and these have been incorporated in the version printed elsewhere in this issue. Please look at it carefully: the committee would like to have comments from as many members as possible before it is finally agreed by the Committee at its next meeting.

Another way in which members can have input is by making nominations for the McCulla Award. This prestigious award recognises the work of local studies librarians in providing excellent services to their clients and is made to the 'Local Studies Librarian of the Year'. Further details elsewhere. Do think about it.

In the same way local studies librarians can enter publications for the Alan Ball Awards for local studies publications, organised by the Library Services Trust. These awards celebrate their twenty fifth anniversary next year, so they would welcome a large number of entries. Details elsewhere. Again, do think about it – and take action.

Local studies collections seem to be being developed in some areas. The important Newcastle Collection now occupies a floor in the new Newcastle City Library, which has received a good deal of coverage in the press. We hope to have an article about this collection in the next issue. Meanwhile, the Bishopsgate Institute in London, with its important London collections, having received grants of £1.55 million towards their building renewal project, has closed temporarily, although access will continue to be available to the special collections.

And finally... welcome to our new Chairman Terry Bracher, and many thanks to Don Martin for his devoted work over the past few years.

TURNING THE PAGES IN NEWCASTLE: LOOKING FORWARD TO NEWCASTLE'S PAST

Angela Foster

In 2006 Newcastle Libraries were awarded £429,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund to improve access to the special heritage collections of the Library Service. Like most city library services, Newcastle is proud to own some outstanding heritage material acquired by the City over the years, including some of the first printed books in Newcastle. Many of these collections are not well known and prior to the new City Library being opened were kept in less than ideal conditions. Throughout the planning of the new building we were committed to improving access and awareness of this unique material which shaped the future of Newcastle and planned to have a special area in the new library to showcase these collections. The Heritage Lottery Fund grant has enabled us to do this in a creative, interactive way which will promote the collections worldwide.

The project has three strands:

- To raise awareness and use of the collections
- To conserve the stock
- To deliver a programme of educational outreach and engagement.

Access

One of the ways of raising awareness of the collections and reaching new audiences was to develop an innovative website **www.newcastle.gov.uk/newcastlecollection** containing a facility to 'turn the pages' of selected material from the Newcastle Collection.

Turning the Pages is an award-winning interactive programme developed by Armadillo Systems which allows users to virtually 'turn' pages, zoom-in on high-quality digitised images and read or listen to explanatory notes and music. In partnership with Armadillo, the British Library has developed this software to make unique heritage material accessible and attractive to new audiences whilst protecting original works. Nationally it has helped to create a sense of ownership and pride in the country's cultural treasures and we are very proud to have been able to extend this facility to the cultural treasures of Newcastle upon Tyne.

The capacity to view more than one or two pages at a time, to zoom in on the intricate detail of something like a Thomas Bewick engraving or to add some interpretative text to a handwritten document has brought the material to life in a way that a static display in a case or exhibition could not achieve.

Heritage material is often inaccessible to customers with a visual impairment but flexibility of the software and the capacity to access the material via a website and a standalone console means that the customer can enlarge text and hear an audio interpretation of the content.

The technology adds a new dimension to material that previously had little attraction to all but the academic and the ability to post comments and content will hopefully result in an improved understanding of the works we display and the wider collections of the City.

What to include?

There is so much unique and beautiful material contained in the collections that it was extremely difficult to choose only a few examples. Our aim was to select material that was significant to the people of Newcastle. We decided to select stock that was visually attractive, representative of the range of material and would tell something of the story of Newcastle as it developed from a strategic stronghold to an industrial town and ultimately a city of culture, science and enterprise. We also wanted material that would fully utilise the facilities available on Turning the Pages. Eventually twelve items were selected from six of the collections including watercolour prints as well as books and the technical part of the process was ready to begin.

Preparation

Each book or painting which was selected was carefully packed and taken down to the British Library to be digitised by the photographic department. There were very strict requirements from Armadillo for each book. Every image had to be individually identified and full instructions supplied to the photographers. We also had to include details of the front and back cover of the book, the spine and in the case of the watercolours, include instructions on the creation of a "book" so the "pages" could appear to be turned.

The British Library scanned the images to 300 PPI uncompressed TIFF files: each image was between 80-108MB, and the scans were then passed to Armadillo to be converted to the required file format for TTP2 hosting.

A written introductory text was required. Nine of the books have audio attached: this had to be supplied in a specific format, the running order of the images had to be specified precisely and a short description of each book had to be included. There were emails passing backwards and forwards for many months before the process was completed!

We worked closely with the British Library and Armadillo who did all the technical wizardry and supplied a great deal of advice, support and patience. Not only did Armadillo provide all the technical support: they had an innate understanding of the value of our heritage and their total commitment to bringing our material to life was inspiring.

Making heritage speak

It was very important for us to create an alternative to people simply being able to see the material. We wanted it to "speak" to people and we wanted to help customers understand a bit more about the material so that they could begin to understand why we keep it, what it tells us about our predecessors and why it is still important today. One way of doing this was to provide some commentary. With the support of a local company, Media Arts, we recorded some introductory narratives in a special studio to meet the strict requirements of the Turning the Pages site.

We wanted to provide a varied experience of material and voices to try to encapsulate the diverseness and originality of the collections: there is the facility on 'Turning the Pages' to read the introductory script whilst listening to the audio. With this in mind we recorded the Lord Mayor of Newcastle reading an eighteenth century story

by Thomas Bewick in both Geordie and 'English'. There is also a selection of music composed by Charles Avison, a local composer who many people believe to be the greatest concerto composer of the eighteenth century, to accompany the pages of the Avison workbook. One of the collections is of watercolour prints of conches which are very detailed and beautifully painted. Nine of the books have a recording of the introductory texts spoken by four members of staff. We used two male and two female staff members, all with different accents, to provide a variety of voices.

The finished product

Once all the images were digitised, recordings made and interpretative text written we had to decide about the front page of the site. We decided to use the same design as the British Library and have the covers of the books displayed as the first point of entry. The Newcastle Council web design team worked closely with us throughout the project and provided absolutely vital support in creating the link between the Armadillo hosting site and the new Newcastle Collection website. Turning the Pages 2 is designed to run on Microsoft Vista: we are aware that many customers will not have this version but they can download Silverlight for Windows or MAC and have access to the full range of 'Turning the Pages' facilities at home.

The British Library's Turning the Pages touch screen consoles are one of the most popular destinations for visitors to the Library and we wanted something similar in the new City Library. Plans to have a secondary console in a community library did not initially work out although we will be exploring the possibility of this very soon.

There was some debate about the style of the touch screen we wanted for the new City Library. We had to decide between discreet and tasteful or loud and proud. Loud and proud won the day because we wanted something that immediately drew the customer to the screen. Protouch provided us with the free standing console for the library which is clearly branded in the Newcastle Collection livery.

Costs

When the funding application to ILF was made in 2006 the cost of Turning the Pages was about £40,000. By the time we were ready to start work on the project developments in technology significantly reduced this amount enabling us to digitise more images and be more creative in its development. Final costs are:

British Library	Digitisation of up to 450 images	£10,500
Armadillo	TTP software support, maintenance, 5 year hosting. Formatting of images, design, project management	£29,000
Protouch	40" touch screen, illuminated panel, branding	£8,000

Finally

The 'Turning the Pages' facility is available both on the website and also from a free standing touch screen in the new City Library. They are both visually exciting but they are also very user friendly. The new library opened on Sunday 7th June 2009 with the official opening of the Newcastle Collection on Sunday 21st June and there has been much interest from the general public on using the console. The comments so far have been very encouraging. The website has been live for only a few weeks now but already we have received enquiries concerning the collections. We have a fully booked up programme of 'show and tell' sessions based on the

collections and are working with local schools on an education programme which will bring the collections to life for a new generation.

You can find out more about the project at:
www.newcastle.gov.uk/newcastlecollection

Angela Foster is the Libraries' Development Manager, City Library, Newcastle upon Tyne

CARIBBEAN FAMILY HISTORY AT SOLIHULL CENTRAL LIBRARY

Tracey Williams

In 2006, Solihull Library Service, in partnership with Solihull College, successfully bid for funding through the European Social Fund's Equal Engage programme to run free family history courses for beginners tracing Asian or Caribbean ancestry. Although many libraries and record offices have run similar day or half-day events, we believe our 10-week courses to have been the first full-length such courses in the UK.

There were initial expressions of interest from people with Indian and Iranian ancestors but, overwhelmingly, the take-up of the courses was by those researching African-Caribbean ancestry. We were amazed by the enthusiastic response of students who were also questioning why other libraries and educational establishments weren't running similar courses.

Finding tutors

Part of the answer for the lack of courses on African-Caribbean ancestry is undoubtedly the lack of experienced tutors. Certainly, this was a difficulty that we encountered, as our initial three potential tutors all moved overseas before the courses even started! However, we were fortunate in that we had contact with a local Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) Family History Centre and the wealth of experience of their advisors. We were able to recruit two tutors – one an experienced family history advisor, able to help people researching ancestors from most countries in the world, and the other a qualified teacher who had more recently started researching his own ancestors from Nevis. The skills and experience of the two tutors complemented each other well and students said that they were inspired by one of the tutors being on the same journey as they were, just a few steps ahead.

Similarities with other courses

The first challenge for the tutors was in developing a programme of study, given that the courses were new and had no established curriculum. One tutor made contact with authors Guy Grannum¹ and Stephen Porter². Paul Crooks also came to Solihull and gave an inspirational talk about his experiences and his novel, *Ancestors*³, based on his research. He has since produced a new book⁴, which is a more in-depth research guide.

The course content was broadly similar to what may be called 'traditional' family history courses, in terms of the golden rule of working backwards from oneself, asking around the family for information and identifying and locating vital records relating to birth, marriage and death. The records themselves were slightly different and had to be considered in a broader context of a country's history. This was especially true as regards changes in colonial administration, affecting the records kept, the language of those records, and the custodial history and location of any surviving records. The tropical environment, particularly the impact of hurricanes, was also a consideration in the survival rates of records, something that people tracing UK-based ancestors don't normally encounter!

As students progressed with their research, the necessity of background information from other family members became clear. This could sometimes be a challenge, as older relatives were sometimes reluctant to talk, or had little information, as they themselves may have been discouraged from asking questions of other relatives when they were young. Many of the students had relatives scattered all over the world – some of the places mentioned were the United States, Canada, Panama and Cuba, as well as places throughout the UK and the Caribbean. It is also common practice for pet names to be used within families of Caribbean descent and, often, younger family members may not actually know an individual's official name.

A significant part of the course was looking at how information could best be obtained from within the family. One strategy was, rather than 'fishing' for information from older relatives, to present some information obtained from another source and ask for the person's opinion. Few people can resist the chance to correct information and what might have appeared impertinent as a question, becomes instead a matter of setting the record straight!

Age profile and course delivery

Most of the students on the Caribbean family history courses were in their 30s and 40s and, as most were in full-time employment, this also had an impact on course times and attendance.

The courses were delivered at Solihull Central Library and at Solihull College's campus at Smith's Wood, in the north of the borough. Classes ran in the evening at the college and, initially, during the day at the library. However, the daytime class was not well attended so, after consultation, we changed the timing of the library classes to Saturday afternoons. This worked well whilst the courses were free and it mattered less if students couldn't attend one or two sessions. However, this did become an issue once we were looking at whether the courses could continue once the year's funding ended. It was not possible to sustain paid-for courses on Saturdays, which has also been our experience with traditional family history courses. However, a group of ex-students has formed the Solihull Caribbean Family History Group, which continues to meet at Solihull Central Library to take advantage of the People's Network PCs and the support of the library staff. The group continues to acquire new members and acts as a referral point and support group for new researchers.

Identity

It became clear from the first session of the courses that there were much more fundamental questions of identity amongst some of the students beginning their

Caribbean family history research than was usual amongst more traditional family historians.

It was upsetting to hear some of the students' experiences, such as that recounted by a woman in her 30s who was born and brought up in Birmingham but who experienced racism whilst growing up. During her childhood there were frequent taunts of "Go back to where you came from" and she didn't quite feel that Birmingham, or Britain, was really home. Then, when aged about 13, she was very excited to be visiting Jamaica and 'going home' for the first time. However, her excitement soon turned to puzzlement when she arrived in Jamaica only to be told by people there "You're English". This confusion and lack of a feeling of truly belonging anywhere was a common story related by students on the courses and was given by many as a reason for their interest in family history.

Clearly, family history research for these students was not the nice, time-filling pastime for the retired that it is often portrayed to be. I'm sure all librarians involved with family historians know of the importance of the research and discovery process to individuals. However, my experience of being involved with the Caribbean family history students was that this really mattered in a very much more personal way.

During the 13 months that the courses were running, there was much media coverage of 'black on black' knife crime. The feeling amongst the students was that if the family history courses could be rolled out to young people, the feelings of pride, belonging and identity that would be engendered could help to offset the disengagement and need for a sense of belonging that often lies behind the gang culture. Some of the students were also youth workers and said that they would be cascading what they had learned on the courses to their youth groups.

Impact

Most established courses involving African-Caribbean history appear to focus on the general history and administration of the islands, set in the context of issues around colonialism and slavery. What is often missing is what Nick Barratt calls personal heritage⁵ and which our Caribbean family history courses in Solihull aimed to deliver.

It's this very personal connection to the past that often brings history alive and makes it relevant. Whilst this is true for almost all family historians, it seems to be especially true for Britons tracing African-Caribbean ancestry.

One participant said he felt that he had been on a personal journey and had arrived at a place where he was able to embrace all of his ancestors, black and white, and accept their legacy to him with pride. Another comment from a student is: "Here in the 21st century, I was able to somehow 'peek through a portal hole', made possible from the documented events of those who had lived before me, those who had a direct link to me. I feel honoured!"

For library staff, it has been a pleasure and a privilege to have been involved with the students as they embarked on their family history research. I'd encourage all libraries to consider offering similar sessions and to make contact with their local LDS Family History Centre as a starting point. Our website⁶ also includes guidance on Caribbean family history research and has links to useful sources.

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- ³ Crooks, Paul. *Ancestors*. London: Black Amber Books, 2002. Paul's website is at www.netcomuk.co.uk/~prcrooks/
- ⁴ Crooks, Paul. *Tree Without Roots : The Guide to Tracing African, Anglo and Asian Ancestry in the Caribbean*. London: Arcadia Books, 2008.
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- ⁶ www.solihull.gov.uk/familyhistory - follow the link to Caribbean family history.

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BEATING THE CRUNCH: report of a course in the North East

Anne Sharp

On April 29th 2009 the Society of Chief Librarians North East (SCLNE), and the Local Studies Group through Committee member Anne Sharp, held their first regional professional training day for Local Studies Librarians.

Each year a panel of Local Studies Librarians in the North East has coordinated an annual family or local history training day for frontline staff. The group meets quarterly to discuss current issues and explore opportunities for collaborative working. In 2008 SCLNE reformed the group, extending the remit to support the local heritage agenda. With the closure of the regional MLA and with it the loss of local training and networking events for professional practitioners, the group sought fresh opportunities to link with colleagues across museums, archives, academic and voluntary sectors. The training day sought to provide opportunities to network, share ideas and good practice, and was open to those working in local studies, students, the unwaged, archivists, museum staff and librarians working in other fields.

This event was hosted by South Tyneside Libraries and costs were deliberately kept low, mindful of the economic climate and that attendees may not receive financial support.

The event was opened by Mark Freeman, South Tyneside Libraries Manager and Chair of SCLNE. His talk "Why bother?" explored the value of local studies collections and services to individuals and communities, and to local and national agendas.

In "Thorny Dilemmas: issues faced in the current climate" Anne Sharp explored the benefits of working creatively to balance the challenges of meeting increasingly diverse demands and expectations within diminished resources.

Diane Marlborough, Information & Learning Officer, Hartlepool Libraries, shared some exciting projects that have taken place in Hartlepool, and how her role has changed.

Anthea Lang, Gateshead Local History & Heritage Manager, explained the very successful volunteer programme at Gateshead Heritage Centre, and how working with volunteers adds value to services, with benefits to volunteers, those engaged with the help of volunteers, and the local area.

After lunch, when participants were free to roam and enjoy the delights of South Shields, the delegates regrouped to learn more about the South Tyneside Libraries digitisation project. *Capturing the Spirit of South Tyneside* is very much a partnership and community heritage project to put historic images online, and is being developed brick by brick, project by project, grant by grant. Anne Sharp introduced the highs and lows in the planning and development of the project in "From Visualisation to Realisation", while Ian Smith of House of Images demonstrated the technical aspects.

In "Begging the Money", Ellie Fotheringham, Heritage Lottery Fund Grants/Development Officer, explained the different grants available, how to access these, and which projects were more likely to succeed.

Professor Malcolm Grady rounded off the day with an inspiring talk presenting a collaborator's viewpoint. Representing Sunderland University's Centre for Lifelong Learning, which works in partnership with South Tyneside, Gateshead and Durham Libraries to run local history courses, he discussed the way in which the partners working collaboratively have been able to increase participation in learning, and open up hands-on access to special collections in libraries and museums. A walking history element has linked collections to, and increased understanding of, local heritage, bringing greater appreciation and raising the profile of local studies collections with local communities.

Feedback from the event was extremely positive. Participants valued the networking opportunity, reducing isolation and sharing ideas to overcome obstacles, and inspiring them to try something new or take steps towards developing their services in different ways.

Anne Sharp is Local Studies Librarian, South Tyneside Libraries.

LOCAL STUDIES GROUP AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Group committee has drafted the following aims and objectives for the Local Studies Group. These were presented at the AGM in June and a couple of amendments were received. We would like to ensure our members agree with our objectives, so if you have any comments or additions please send them to the Hon. Secretary, Helen Pye-Smith, by **23rd October** at the latest. We plan to finalise these at the next committee meeting in November.

Aim of Group

The Local Studies Group (LSG) is a Special Interest Group of CILIP. The object of the Group is to further the aims of CILIP within the Local Studies field by uniting those members of CILIP and the Group engaged or interested in Local Studies, fostering communication, facilitating exchange of experience and continuing professional development, and by promoting relevant work.

Overall Objectives

• Membership

- Maintain and develop membership of the Group
- Actively seek new members of the Group
- Identify what members want from the Group and how they can be supported

• Advocacy

- Provide a strong voice to advocate local studies at a national level drawing on expertise and views of members
- Provide support for local studies services under pressure
- Monitor local studies activity across the country
- Respond to national and regional consultation documents especially where they relate to local studies services

• Communications

- Proactively communicate with members of the Group to keep them informed of current activities and issues using tools such as the journal, the website and email
- Engage with national and local issues relating to local studies, contributing to CILIP responses and discussions

• Regional Support

- Develop regional Sub-groups to encourage active participation in the Group and to engage with regional issues in the field

• Cross-sectoral working

- Promote cross-sectoral working with other relevant areas such as family history, archives and museums, and other local history groups and CILIP groups

- **Publications**
 - Publish two issues of *Local Studies Librarian* per year
 - Maintain and develop a website for the group via CILIP's content management system and following their guidelines
 - Support and encourage the production of newsletters by the Sub-groups
- **McCulla Award**
 - Celebrate, publicise and support excellent and innovative services in the local studies field by annual provision of the Dorothy McCulla Award
 - Promote awareness of the award through relevant channels
- **Training and networking**
 - Hold regular events, workshops, meetings, visits to support continuing personal and professional development, knowledge of the local studies field and provide opportunities to meet others working in local studies and other relevant areas
 - Encourage Sub-groups to continue their programme of events
 - Ensure all events cover their costs
- **International Activity**
 - Enhance knowledge of international activity in the Local Studies field by support, and where possible, involvement in, initiatives
 - Support the IFLA Gencalogy and Local History section representative to actively participate in and promote the work of the section
- **Participation in CILIP Policy Forum**
 - Actively participate in and initiate debate through CILIP's Policy Forum
 - Provide a Policy Forum representative and a back-up representative from the Group.

Specific objectives for a three/five year action plan

- Publish two issues of the *Local Studies Librarian* and consider publishing in electronic form as well as print
- Continue to develop the LSG website, keeping it current and relevant to the work of the Group, and using it to publicise events and other activities
- Hold a national group event in conjunction with the AGM to encourage more communication with members and better participation and engagement with them
- Support the establishment of the LSG South Sub-group
- Continue to investigate sub-groups in areas not already covered, for example the North-East and Wales
- Develop a policy statement about the future of local studies collections and/or their staff
- Publicise activities in the CILIP Gazette and other relevant places

ENGAGING COMMUNITIES: the Local Studies Group National Conference 2009

Anne Sharp

The Local Studies Group Committee took the topical theme Engaging Communities: Local Studies in the 21st Century as the theme to bring participants together at our National Conference, held at the National Archives, at Kew, on 8th June, 2009.

Course coordinators, committee members Jill Barber (Hertfordshire) and Helen Pye-Smith (National Archives) pulled together a day which offered insights and perceptions from speakers with diverse experience, and opportunities for information and skills sharing, networking and inspiration.

Dr John Hunt, University of Birmingham and Adult and Community Education, Warwickshire County Council, opened the Conference to consider "Local History in the Community: whose agenda?" Lamenting that "the world that gave rise to academic local history within local projects has passed" Dr Hunt pointed out that local history is, nevertheless, "adaptable to the circumstances in which it operates, capable of fashioning itself to reflect the agendas of partner organisations and funding bodies." Heritage Lottery Funding provides a way forward, with opportunities to engage communities in local studies and oral history projects: these provide lifelong and informal learning opportunities, while at the same time meeting the needs of various social, economic and heritage agendas, to develop a Sense of Place and identity, community cohesion and social inclusion. Lottery supported projects are "now too important to ignore", and instead of tying ourselves in knots to meet targets, tick boxes, and dancing to different agendas, a concerted "national initiative to advance partnership working with LIIF, seeking more coherent approaches and genuine acceptance of the intrinsic value of local history studies would benefit all parties". Local Studies Libraries have a pivotal role to play, providing a point for networks to engage in delivering and participating in such projects.

Sue Mayo, an Intergenerational Arts Specialist, shared her experience in "Engaging Elders - Participation and Learning in the Heritage Sector" with a project which centred on a National Trust property, Sutton House, in Hackney. This Tudor House was destined to remain derelict and occupied by squatters, until a local group campaigned for a heritage project to restore the property, and to raise awareness in the community. Local elders were encouraged into the property through outreach activities and personal invitations (flyers in libraries did not work). Activities included self-portraits and oral histories. Eventually the property became of interest to and part of the lives of local elders, who were offered free meeting space and transport on Fridays. The social and learning opportunities increased participation by the local community, self-confidence in individuals, and the relevance and care of Sutton House to local people. Some have become volunteers, with their own ideas for activities and projects. <http://www.ourplacenetWORK.org.uk/jdd/public/documents/word/Connection.doc>

Maureen Burns, Local Studies Librarian, Tameside Archives and Local Studies, described with passion the Mancunian Reunion project "Fresh Hope and Fresh Air". This reminiscence project brought together 100 people to share memories on the themes of: The Way we Were, New Beginnings, Finding Feet, Community Spirit,

Boxing, and Pubs and Social Life. Participants were actively involved in and had ownership of the project, with opportunities to be listened to through consultation, memories valued through reminiscence, and participation through volunteering. The project produced a DVD and exhibition, and, even more importantly, was confidence building and life-changing. As Local Studies Librarian, Maureen Burns also realised her ambition to improve the collection of material relating to Hattersley, copying and digitising photographs borrowed for this purpose. <http://www.mancunionreunion.co.uk/>

Pam Riding and Linda Smith, from Huddersfield Local Studies Library, talked about engaging Under 5s with the "Holmfirth Tiger Project". This exciting local history and community arts project was inspired by the story of Fenella, a tiger cub in the care of a local family in the 1940s. The library worked with the family, the local community, early arts network, reception and nursery teachers, two paid artists and a voluntary artist seeking experience. Supported by MLA Yorkshire, the project provided many social opportunities for reminiscence. Some memories were recorded. Arts activities included tiger face-painting, a picture book telling the story from Fenella's perspective, and the creation of a mosaic. A loans box linked to KS1 Animals and Us and KS1 and KS2 What was it like to live here in the past, has been developed with craft ideas, finger puppets, and postcards of what Holmfirth looked like in Fenella's time. <http://www.myworkshire.org/overview.asp?journeyid=54>.

Peter Daniel and Camilla Bergman, of Westminster Archives and Local Studies, described the Walter Tull project, Crossing the White Line. Walter Tull was Britain's first black Army Officer and first black outfield footballer in the first division. This ambitious project engaged over 1000 people directly, with education sessions in primary and secondary schools, drama, animation, design, literacy and discussion workshops and sessions. A performance and touring exhibition took the story out to more audiences. www.crossingthewhiteline.com

Conference participants could attend two of the four workshops. My first option was Performance, Learning and Heritage by Jenny Kidd, City University of London. This workshop looked at the use of performance in heritage venues, the aims being to bring heritage to life, to provide opportunities for visitors to engage more actively by asking the actors questions, and to improve the learning experience. The example explored looked at the use and experience of slaves from the perspective of a slave and slave owner. We also considered where performance might be used in library and archive venues, perhaps to develop the theme of a display or exhibition. <http://www.plh.manchester.ac.uk/report/Performance,%20Learning%20&%20Heritage%20-%20Executive%20Summary.pdf>

My second option was Tubular Tales, led by Tracey Williams, Solihull Heritage and Local Studies. Tracey provided a clear step-by-step demonstration, putting together a multimedia presentation, bringing together oral history, images and video.

A tour of the National Archives rounded off a very fast, full, inspiring day. Friendships were renewed and new contacts made, and the trials of the London Underground at the beginning of the day long forgotten.

Anne Sharp is Local Studies Librarian, South Tyneside Libraries and LSG Hon. Treasurer

BATTLES BATTALIONS AND PAPERS: Access to Military Records

Tony Pilmer and Miriam Farr

In a year which marks 70 years since the beginning of World War II and 90 years since the Treaty of Versailles Local Studies Group South thought that it was fitting to hold its first study day on military material. The aim of the day was to help local studies and other information professionals refer users to material outside their own collections. The event was held at the Imperial War Museum on 29th April.

Eager to help those travelling from outside the South East to get to London, the official programme started at noon though for those who came earlier Foster Summerson, one of the Museum's volunteers, gave a conducted tour of the main hall of the Imperial War Museum (IWM). He explained that the museum was originally the home of the Bethlem Hospital, before being converted to house a collection of post-1914 material from the armed forces from what was then the British Empire. Among the material mentioned was 'Old Bill' which was one of the first of about 60 London buses used to transport troops round Northern France during World War One. Other items included General Montgomery's command tank and a motorbike used by Lawrence of Arabia as well as aircraft such as a Sopwith Camel.

The first session of the day, *Family History research at the Imperial War Museum* was delivered by Sarah Patterson, from the IWM's Department of Printed Books. After giving a brief history of the museum's origins and development, including outliers at Duxford, HMS Belfast on the Thames, The Churchill Museum and Cabinet War Rooms in Westminster and IWM North in Manchester, she went on to talk about the research departments housed in the main museum in Lambeth Road:

- The Art department holds the largest collection of British Twentieth Century art outside the Tate
- Documents houses personal papers relating to war
- Exhibitions and Firearms look after artefacts
- The Film and Video Archive has 120 million feet of film and 6,500 hours of video
- The Photograph Archive has over ten million images
- The Department of Printed Books is the national library for twentieth and twenty-first century conflict
- The Sound Department has 56,000 hours of interviews with those from the armed forces and the home front
- In addition, the UK Inventory of War Memorials (UKNIWM) documents physical remembrances of war.

The IWM does not hold service records or military archives.

To help find your way around, the IWM has produced an excellent series of books on Tracing your Family History which are a must for local studies collections and there are also advice leaflets. The key to finding material is to know in which unit the person served, as this opens up different types of resources, many of them held elsewhere.

After lunch, the next talk, *Up and Coming Developments at the National Archives* was by William Spencer, Senior Military Specialist at The National Archives, and

dealt with the challenges confronting the release of government military records. He explained that before 1995 The National Archives' (TNA) catalogues were in hard copy, but in the last fifteen years ten million catalogue records have been created on the online catalogue. These describe the types of records held by TNA, but the real need is to know what is inside the individual records. Most of the First World War Army service records were destroyed during a bombing raid in 1940, but those which survived have been microfilmed and the microfilms have now been digitised and put into www.ancestry.co.uk and www.ancestrylibrary.com and have been indexed, though not always completely. TNA is now in the process of digitising other records and is looking at the 142.5 million pieces of paper which form the Ministry of Defence (MOD) service records from 1920-63.

There are a number of challenges connected with making the mid-twentieth century service records available to the public for instance: each of the services sort their records differently; the numbering of records was inconsistent; some material was catalogued in a database by people whose first language was not English; there could be problems if potentially sensitive information is put on the internet, but the costs of sifting would slow the process down and make it more expensive; where to start? The Home Guard might be seen suitable as most of the participants will have passed away, but there is still the potential for embarrassing material to appear. The Canadians digitise material on demand. As long as each item is catalogued properly this would be a cost effective method – after all, Freedom of Information requests are a form of on-demand service. There are also problems with material which was “born digital”, but the MOD has had to learn to handle electronic records quickly

The speaker said that these obstacles will be overcome and it should be possible to put this material in the public domain within the next five years. However, in the current financial situation, who will finance it?

After this presentation the delegates divided into two and one group was taken on a tour of two of the IWM's Collections, led by Sarah Paterson. They started at the round reading room used by the Departments of Documents and Printed Books. The room resembles a smaller version of the old British Museum Reading Room, with Documents and Printed Books enquiry desks on a platform in front of the readers. General reference books line the walls. The Reading Room is open Monday to Saturday: users are asked to make an appointment to ensure that there is a place for them.

The initial access point for the Sound Archive is a small room off the main reading room with computers where users can search the catalogue of interviews with former servicemen and those on the home front. The majority of material is digitised and can be heard by clicking on a link on the catalogue.

The next part of the tour was to the stacks, where samples from the wide variety of printed material was shown, and the tour finished with a look at the document store.. Not only are there, for example, censored and uncensored letters, diaries, unpublished manuscripts and war crimes trials documents, but also documents collected by serving officers which should perhaps be in the MOD Archives rather than with their private papers.

Meanwhile the other half of the group heard a presentation on the *United Kingdom National Inventory of War Memorials* by Jane Furlong, Project Coordinator, IWM. This project has been running since 1989 and its aim is to record all UK war memorials, including those which have been lost. The project relies heavily on the work of some 160 volunteers nationally. Over the last twenty years the project has documented over 56,000 of the estimated 100,000 UK war memorials; while most commemorate the two world wars there are many related to other conflicts. Apart from the basic information about location and conflict commemorated, further information such as designer, builder and funding can often be found: volunteers research a wide range of sources in local studies libraries and record offices including local committee records and local newspapers.

Jane gave a good deal of useful information about memorials and their diverse nature, both in terms of their form and who was likely to be commemorated. The project is still ongoing so suggestions and pieces of information are always welcome: it is now beginning to provide a useful insight into the social history of commemoration and localities in the UK as well as providing information about individuals. In the future photographs will be linked to the record and will also be available. Also in the project's future plans are an online interactive map which allows enquirers to click on the areas they want; providing learning activities such as talks and online resources; developing the volunteer base; and adding the names of all those commemorated and linking to online databases like that of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and other related websites.

The final talk of the day was a highly entertaining and informative presentation by Paul Evans and Mark Smith, respectively Librarian and Curator of the Royal Artillery Museum, and covered the different types of resources they look after and the type of information that they can help researchers find. It was explained that history and tradition is everything to the British Army, so much so, in fact, that each regiment has its own historical section which includes the regimental museum. The type of materials held by regimental museums – and what is not – was explained. While a list of material in the Royal Artillery Museum was given, for the delegates this museum served as an excellent example for military museums generally. It was pointed out that while anyone was welcome to visit the Royal Artillery Library to undertake research there is a daily charge and that in fact most regimental museums do make such a charge.

This last session was followed by LSG South's inaugural AGM and reception.

The study day proved to be a great success in providing a great deal of new information and sources to local studies librarians in a fascinating and entertaining way. Thanks go to all our speakers and especially to Sarah Paterson who so kindly hosted the event.

Tony Pilmer and Miriam Farr are members of LSG South

Editor's Note. The authors have prepared a more extensive report and summary of the presentations, including references to websites. Please contact **Tony.Pilmer@slough.gov.uk**

LOCAL STUDIES LIBRARIAN OF THE YEAR 2009

Nominations are being sought for the 2009 Dorothy McCulla Memorial Prize for Local Studies Librarian of the Year. This is an opportunity for high calibre local studies librarians to be recognised nationally, as well as at a local level. There is much excellent work being carried out and appreciated by librarians at a local level, and much of it is worthy of wider recognition. Do you know anyone who has provided excellent and innovative services that you would like to nominate for the Prize? While ideally there would be positive support from the top, the nominator does not need to be a chief librarian – nominations are welcome from line managers, colleagues and service users who are aware of the candidate's achievements: the nominee, however, must be a member of the Local Studies Group.

Details about the award and a nomination form can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, Helen Pye-Smith, email Helen.pye-smith@nationalarchives.gov.uk, tel: 020 8392 5278 or from the Local Studies Group website at <http://www.cilip.org.uk/specialinterestgroups/bysubject/localstudies/activities/mccullapriz.htm>

Closing date: 30 September 2009

LOCAL STUDIES GROUP ANNUAL REPORT 2008

In 2008 CILIP's business year changed, so that instead of running from April to March it now runs from January to December. Consequently the period covered by this report is shorter than usual, being from 1st April to 31st December 2008. Next year's report will cover the whole of 2009.

The Committee met twice during the period covered, at Birmingham Central Library.

There were a few changes to the Committee during the year:

Philip Thomas retired as Honorary Treasurer, after twelve years serving as Honorary Treasurer for the Group, plus two as Honorary Secretary. The Group is greatly indebted to Philip for all his work and support.

Anne Sharp, South Tyneside Local Studies Library, joined the Committee as Hon. Treasurer in November 2008. Richard Abbott, from Birmingham Central Library, also joined the Committee as our representative on British and Irish Committee on Map Information and Cataloguing Systems (BRICMICS).

Elizabeth Melrose is the Committee representative on CILIP's Policy Forum and Jill Barber the back-up representative.

The Committee was invited to send a representative to BALH (British Association for Local History) and Diana Dixon agreed to take on this role.

Two issues of the *Local Studies Librarian* have been published. Ian Jamieson, the Editor, is still keen to find an assistant editor.

The Website has been kept up-to-date and an increasing number of enquiries continue to be received via the website. It is good to know that LSG members are using the website and finding the Contact Us form. Feedback on the usefulness of the website itself, or suggestions for other information that could be added to it would be welcome.

The Dorothy McCulla Memorial Prize 2008 was awarded to Maureen Burns from Tameside Local Studies and Archives Centre, for her innovative work in a socially inclusive context, cross-sectoral working with archivist colleagues, and community engagement.

The regional sub-groups continued to grow and develop and a number of successful events were held. The North-West sub-group held a Lancashire dialect event and a day school on special collections in Liverpool. LOCSCOT held two day schools, on the history of printing and ancestral tourism, and a visit to the National Library of Scotland. Midlands and Anglia sub-group held a visit to Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre and a day school on "Reaching new audiences through local studies".

Work has progressed to establish a new sub-group in the South of England, initiated by Norman Briggs. Anne Sharp is working to try to set up a sub-group in the North East of England.

The Group decided not to participate in Umbrella this year, but instead to hold a national local studies day school in London in 2009. This will be combined with the AGM to encourage greater attendance.

Communications with members of the LSG continued to be a concern and various options are under consideration including setting up a Jisemail list for Local Studies, producing the *Local Studies Librarian* in an electronic format, and carrying out an audit of local studies provision across the country to gain a better understanding of the local studies picture nationally.

The groups Aims and Objectives have been revised and will be presented at the AGM.

We are always looking for new people to get involved with the Local Studies Group. This is a good way to meet people working in your area, influence how things are done and a useful addition to your CV or Chartership portfolio. If you would like to know more about what the Committee does or are interested in getting involved please do contact us.

Helen Pye-Smith, Honorary Secretary LSG

LSG TREASURER'S REPORT 2008

The Treasurer's report for 2007 noted the need to reconsider expenditure as a consequence of the reduced capitation from CILIP. In addition, there was no surplus due to the Group from Umbrella 2008. To this end national committee met twice, instead of three times, and members continue to actively consider viable options for income generation to meet costs, while supporting the needs of members in a challenging economic climate. Proposals included a day school or conference in 2009, to facilitate the exchange of ideas.

Payments incurred in 2007 include those to CILIP for the distribution of Local Studies Librarian, a task formerly undertaken by Philip Thomas to keep costs to the Group down. In addition, £1,000 was transferred from the former London and Home Counties Charities Deposit to the newly formed Local Studies South sub-group.

In this my first report as Treasurer for LSG, I wish to thank the outgoing Treasurer, Philip Thomas, for his unfailing professional support and advice in handing on and explaining the finer points of the LSG accounts.

Anne Sharp.

June 2009

Registered Charity no. 313014
LOCAL STUDIES GROUP of CILIP

Income & Expenditure A/c for the year ended 31st December 2008

EXPENDITURE		INCOME	
Nett VAT on Goods & Services	2-20	Capitation from CILIP	2108-00
LOCAL STUDIES LIBRARIAN: (2 issues)		Royalties from FACET	
Printing & Distribution	2560-85	Publ. "Guidelines"	2-48
Less Sales, Subscriptions		COIF Charities Deposit	
& Advertising	547-16	Interest	179-39
Main Committee (2 Mtgs)	815-75		
Attendance at Outside Mtgs (2)	126-76		2289-87
Stationery/Photocopying	9-53	Deficit for year, carried	
Postages/Phone Calls	15-92	fwd to Balance Sheet	837-93
McCulla Award - 2008 Prize	100-00		
2007 Expenses	32-62		
	132-62		
Group Publicity	2-72		
International Relations	8-61		
	£3127-80		£3127-80
	=====		=====

BALANCE SHEET as at 31st December 2008

LIABILITIES

Accumulated Surplus as at 31 st December 2007	£4832-84	
Less Deficit for 2008 (B/down from above)	837-93	
Accumulated Surplus as at 31 st December 2008		£3994-91
CREDITORS : McCulla Award for 2008 (not yet paid)	100-00	
Prepaid Subscriptions to "Local Studies Librarian" for Winter 2008	49-25	
VAT (nett) due to CILIP	30-91	
CILIP- distribution of "Local Studies Librarian" (Summer 2008)	445-36	625-52
		£4620-43
		=====

ASSETS

Balance at Barclays Bank		£ 187-17
Balance at COIF Charities Deposit		4433-26
		£4620-43
		=====

ADDITIONALLY

Balances Held for Sub-Groups on Charities Deposit:		
LSG SOUTH (formerly London & Home Counties)	£1261-45	
ADD Interest for year	67-73	
	1329-18	
LESS Drawn to open New Bank A/c (as below)	1000-00	£ 329-18
SCOTTISH (LOCSCOT)	£1694-68	
ADD Interest for year	92-75	1787-43
CYMRU/WALES	£ 800-63	
ADD Interest for year	43-84	844-47
		£2961-08
		=====
Nett Balances held by Sub-Groups:		
LSG SOUTH (New Bank A/c- as above)		£1000-00
MIDLANDS & ANGLIA (Current A/c)	£ 994-11	
(Their Own) COIF Charities Deposit A/c	3489-52	4483-63
NORTH-WESTERN		551-10
SCOTTISH (LOCSCOT)		2295-93
		£8330-66
		=====

Anne Sharp, Hon. Treasurer
Assisted by Philip Thomas .

Steven M Reed BLIS
Hon. Auditor/Independent Examiner

2nd June 2009

LOCAL STUDIES GROUP COMMITTEE 2009

Chairman: Terry Bracher, Wiltshire County Library
terry.bracher@wiltshire.gov.uk

Vice Chairman: Alice Lock, Tameside Libraries
localstudies.library@tameside.gov.uk

Hon Secretary: Helen Pye-Smith, Resource Centre and Library,
National Archives
helen.pye-smith@nationalarchives.gov.uk

Hon Treasurer: Anne Sharp, South Tyneside Libraries
anne.sharp@southtyneside.gov.uk

Hon Editor, LSL: Ian Jamieson, Newcastle upon Tyne
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CILIP Policy Forum representative:
Elizabeth Melrose, York
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Members:

Richard Abbott, Birmingham Public Library
Richard_Abbott@birmingham.gov.uk

Jill Barber, Hertfordshire County Library
jill.barber@hertscc.gov.uk

Diana Dixon, Southwold
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Elizabeth Melrose, York
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Representatives of the geographic subgroups:

Midlands and Anglia: Tracey Williams, Solihull Public Libraries
twilliams@solihull.gov.uk

North Western: Alice Lock, Tameside Libraries
localstudies.library@tameside.gov.uk

Scottish: Don Martin, Kirkintilloch
dwmmartindon@live.co.uk

South: Norman Briggs, P & C Intelligence, Reading
nwbriggs@pcintell.co.uk

Please feel free to contact committee members or the Hon. Secretary on any matter you wish to have brought to the Committee's attention – or for ideas for meetings, day schools or workshops.

The Group is kept in touch with CILIP headquarters via its new Membership Support Unit.

FROM OUR CILIP POLICY FORUM REPRESENTATIVE

The majority of Branches, Groups and Home Nations are now represented on the CILIP Policy Forum, which is as large an assembly as ever was the old CILIP Council. Also swelling the throng are members of CILIP Council (the Trustees) and the CILIP Vice President who chairs the meeting. This large gathering meets twice a year, latterly in Ridgmount Street, although meetings have been held in Birmingham and Reading.

A useful innovation is the insistence that appointed substitutes should take part when the main representative from the Branch or Group cannot attend a meeting. This gives continuity to the feed-back. I am extremely grateful to Jill Barber, who deputised and attended the November meeting and wrote a report.

Between the twice-yearly gathering there is personal email to keep delegates in touch with each other and with CILIP, and a Policy Forum Network on the Communities pages of the CILIP website. <http://communities.cilip.org.uk/> (login required). I did once with some trepidation respond to a thread on the Policy Forum Network but, in the main, this facility is underused. The last post announces the agenda details for the April meeting. A Mailltalk mailing list for Policy Forum representatives CILIP-POLICY-FORUM@mailltalk.ac.uk has also been organised, and with surprise, I have noticed an email from myself featuring on this – surely some mistake!

Jill Barber wrote an excellent summary of the discussions which took place at the November 2008 meeting of the Policy Forum. She pointed out the topics that could be of importance to the Local Studies Group (Local Studies Librarian vol.27 no.2 pp.19-21).

The April meeting, chaired by CILIP Vice-President, Biddy Fisher, was more concerned with asking the questions "How does the present Policy Forum work?" and, even more far-reaching, "Does the Institute actually need a Policy Forum?" The May 2009 edition of Update published a picture of the Policy Forum in groups discussing its role, present and future. In this photograph, I can just be seen in the far background conferring with the only table that concluded that the Forum should be wound down and its duties, such as they have been, devolved to the Branch and Group Meetings. The Forum was, we felt, a large and awkward body that thereby suffered many of the same snags of the old CILIP Council. However, this proposal was too radical for the meeting as a whole, despite the fact that there were many appeals that the Forum should 'make policy, not just rubber-stamp it'. All agreed that there must be a better way of avoiding 'another layer of bureaucracy' while concentrating on CILIP policy development. We wait to see.

The meeting also heard reports on the Information Society, Public Health, Learning and Professionalism and agreed that nominations should be received for a new post, that of Deputy Chair, to assist the Policy Forum Chair. Proposals for this position have been sent out and I have voted for a candidate who, in a nomination paper, recommended that some continuity was needed at the helm of the Policy Forum (the Chair only serves for one year) and that the Chair required support throughout the year so that issues and concerns could be speedily resolved. We can only hope that the next year of the CILIP Policy Forum may be more relevant and productive.

Note: Peter Beauchamp has now been elected as Deputy Chair of the Forum.

Elizabeth Melrose, Local Studies Group representative on the CILIP Policy Forum

ALAN BALL LOCAL HISTORY AWARDS 2008

The Alan Ball Awards were established in 1985 to encourage high quality local history publishing by libraries and local authorities and this is the twenty fourth year they have been awarded. The judges decided to make three awards, the maximum permitted and also felt that one entry should be Highly Commended and another should be Commended.

The Awards are:

Seal Parish Council for *Seal: the History of a Parish* by Jean Fox, David Williams and Peter Mountfield, which the judges felt was a beautifully produced book, scrupulously researched, that filled a gap because this parish near Sevenoaks has never before had its history fully recorded and disseminated. While this handsome book was commercially published by Phillimore, it was sponsored by Seal Parish Council and the panel had no difficulty in recognising that the parish council was a prime mover, setting an example to other parish councils in the field of local history publishing;

Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council for *Sand and Sea: Sefton's Coastal Heritage*. This well-produced book, the work of many hands but edited by Jennifer Lewis and Jennifer Stanistreet, impressed the judges as an excellent archaeological account of the coastline from Bootle to Southport;

Warwickshire County Council for *Working Lives*. The judges considered this project as a unit, with the submitted book and CD and the full website that gives much more detailed information. The book and CD is a fairly superficial introduction, but the website is extensive and provides just the sort of approach that is needed by those who wish to explore a local area through oral history backed up by written research.

Highly Commended is

City of Newcastle upon Tyne for the *Great Northern Miners* by Ken and Jean Smith, which would certainly have received a full Award if we were not limited to three. The panel felt that this was another example of the production standards achieved by Newcastle over so many years, and that this well-researched book filled another gap by fully recording the story of coalmining in Northumberland and County Durham.

Commended is

Plymouth City Council for *Barbican Archive*. The judges appreciated that the Barbican Archive, covering a historical area of Plymouth, is a multi-faceted project that includes an extensive collection of photographs, exhibitions, internet access and teachers' resource packs. For the Alan Ball Awards the judges received a boxed set of three CDs which they felt were a good example of how oral history recordings can provide an enjoyable and informative record of a local area in all its aspects.

The Library Services Trust has been making these prestigious Awards for almost a quarter of a century. Next year is the twenty fifth anniversary of the Awards and the Trust is hoping to have a record number of entries to celebrate the occasion. Any library, large or small, is encouraged to enter. If you, or your authority, have

published something of a high standard, why not enter next year? You do not need to have a long list of publications or be a large institution: it may be a one-off. They are prestigious awards and usually generate good local publicity. If you have published anything related to local studies, in whatever form - it may be printed, a database or a website, for instance - do consider an entry this year and help the Awards celebrate their anniversary.

You can find out more from Eric Winter, The Library Services Trust, CILIP, 7 Ridgmount Street, London WC1E 7AE.

Tel: 020 7255 0648, email eric.winter@cilip.org.uk

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The Midlands and Anglia Subgroup Day School for 2009 will be at the Nottingham Central Library on Wednesday 7th October, the subject being "Beating the Crunch: Making the most of Local Studies resources in difficult times". There will be a keynote talk from Anne Sharp, Local Studies Librarian, South Tyneside MBC which will explore the issues of balancing quality, expectations, outreach, partnerships and community engagement in the face of decreasing budgets - without going insane. Lesley Caine, Archivist and Volunteer Coordinator from Warwickshire County Record Office, deals with volunteers, discussing the invaluable contribution they make to a busy archive service. In the afternoon Jill Barber, Head of Heritage Services, Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies, talks on why we need to raise the profile of Local Studies and how partnership working can help us do it. Finally there is a session led by Tracey Williams, Local Studies Librarian, Solihull MBC on 'Back to basics: exchanging ideas and sharing good practice'. This is an informal information exchange, where small groups will discuss the things we are all doing that may not involve external funding bids or big time-consuming projects. Delegates are invited to bring along any examples, no matter how small or low key, that may be of interest to share.

The AGM of the Midlands and Anglia subgroup will be held before the afternoon sessions.

For further information contact Tracey Williams at Solihull Central Library, tel 0121 704 6976, email twilliams@solihull.gov.uk

Our **North West Subgroup** is holding a Day School at the Lancashire Record Office, Preston, on Tuesday 13th October, with the title "Local and Family History in the Modern World". This is intended as a general update for people working in local studies and even for interested users. The subjects covered will include local and family history as it is practised today, basic enquiry techniques, maps from Gough to the Ordnance Survey, the nature of archives and manuscript collections and a tour behind the scenes of the Record Office.

The speakers are Alan Crosby, local historian and author, Christine Bradley, Local Studies Librarian, Diana Winterbotham, former local history librarian with over thirty years experience and Jacqui Crosby, deputy Archivist, Lancashire Record Office. The AGM of the North West Subgroup will take place during the lunch break.

For further information contact Maureen Burns at Tameside Local Studies and Archives Centre, tel 0161 342 4242, email localstudies.library@tameside.gov.uk

FROM OUR SUBGROUPS

Our **Midlands and Anglia** subgroup reports that most of its time recently has been occupied in organising the 2009 Day School, to be held in Nottingham in November - more details elsewhere. The latest Newsletter has been issued: it includes articles by a Childrens Librarian and an Out of Hours Learning Coordinator, showing how local studies links in with what they do.

The **North West** subgroup has also been active. In the spring it held a well-attended day school on basic archiving skills - *Archiving for All*. While it was aimed at library staff who also hold archive material it also attracted people from local history societies with their own collections of this material. It was held at the University of Manchester. The speakers included Katharine Carter, the county Archivist for Greater Manchester and conservators from Greater Manchester and Liverpool Record Offices. As noted elsewhere an autumn Day School is to be held in Preston. The subgroup has a deliberate policy of keeping prices for courses low, so that people can afford to come even if not financed by their employers. The subgroup also expressed its concern that the 1911 census will not be released on microfilm and urged the national LSG to lobby the National Archives on this issue. On a more positive note, it looks as if Newsplan North West may be revived.

The **Scottish** subgroup, LocScot reports the success of the 2009 Local History Week. This was on the theme of *Homecoming: Scotland's History in Scottish Libraries*, and libraries from all over Scotland took part, with a variety of activities. The Spring day school this year was on shops and shopping, in line with LocScot's policy of choosing a topic which corresponds with the theme of the next year's National Library Week. LocScot too is concerned over the decision of the General Register Office Scotland not to publish the census on microfilm and also that access will be via Local History Centres, which might cut local libraries out of the loop. It is also reported that Sybil Cavanagh has retired from the LocScot committee and as editor of LocScot Magazine after several years service. The new Editor is Amanda Robb. And ... LocScot has a new logo.

Our new **Southern** subgroup, LSG South, held a most successful day school at the Imperial War Museum in April. It is hoped that this will be the first of an annual series of day schools. In addition the subgroup is looking for ideas for other events, and also for people who would like to join the committee: they are particularly looking for members from London and the south west of the area. Please get in touch with Tony Pilmer at tony.pilmer@slough.gov.uk

MICHAEL D DEWE 1940-2008

Local studies lost one of its champions with the untimely death of Mike Dewe in December 2008. Through his writings, his teaching and his work on the Local Studies Group Committee, Mike played a pivotal role in raising the profile of local studies librarianship. His three books: the *Manual of Local Studies Librarianship* (1987); *Local studies Collections: a manual* (1991) and *Local Studies Collection Management* (2002) were all seminal works, described by one colleague as 'those wonderful books'. Besides these, Mike was a regular contributor to the *Local Studies Librarian* on a variety of topics including Australian local studies and popular culture. His interests extended to printed ephemera, especially in Wales and to skiffle, the topic of his PhD. At the same time, he developed expertise in library planning on which he wrote two influential texts.

Mike's early career was spent in London public libraries, where he soon developed an interest in local history. In the mid 1970s, he took up a teaching post at the College of Librarianship Wales. He remained in Aberystwyth for the rest of his career and his subsequent retirement. His teaching was exemplary and his students readily appreciated his dedication and his commitment to high standards. Colleagues respected Mike for his enthusiasm and the excellence of his teaching and research. As an editor, Mike's scrupulous attention to detail accompanied supportive encouragement when contributors faltered. Above all Mike was a really nice person. A Francophile, with a wide range of interests from rambling to music guaranteed conversation with Mike was never dull. He was entertaining, informed and excellent company. He was extremely influential in the realm of local studies and will be sorely missed. We extend our sympathy to his family.

Diana Dixon, Southwold Museum

HELP WANTED

The Northamptonshire Record Society is looking for a good home for some of its back material. This is related to its journal *Northamptonshire Past and Present*: there are about 350 copies together with their associated printing blocks, dating mainly from the 1960s. They are understandably loath to throw them away, but they have run out of space. Is anyone interested, or do you know anyone who might be? The contact is Mr D Harries, Secretary of the Northamptonshire Record Society, email **enquiries@northamptonshirerecordsociety.org.uk**

We have had an enquiry from CILIP member and LIS student at Aberystwyth, Amber d'Angeles. As part of an assignment she is evaluating online information retrieval systems for a local history library user group. At this stage she is looking for the user needs people have when they are looking to use a new IR system (say a new version of a search engine or a new local history database), for example cost, accuracy, detail etc – and also any needs the library users may have as well. Some of you may already have been contacted. If anyone has any ideas her contact address is **ajd8@aber.ac.uk** and it would be helpful if she could receive anything by 16th September.

NOTES AND NEWS

The Local Studies Group is delighted to announce that we have a new Chairman. He is Terry Bracher from Wiltshire Libraries, formerly of Northamptonshire. Terry has been involved with the Midlands and Anglia subgroup since its inception and has been its representative on the LSG Committee. More recently he has been web editor for LSG, though he is now looking for a successor. No doubt many of you will be meeting him at events in the future. We welcome you most warmly, Terry. The previous Chairman, Don Martin, stood down because having now retired from his post in East Dunbartonshire he felt that as he was no longer in day to day touch with local studies (except for his own research) he should give up his post as Chairman, though for the moment we will retain the benefit of his wide experience as he will be continuing as the LocScot representative on the Committee. We wish him a long and happy retirement.

Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre reports that over 10 000 people visited the Centre in 2008-9, an increase of over 16% on the previous year. The number of postal enquiries was down to about 200, but the number of enquiries by email was over four times as many; most of them were answered within the week. Their web pages registered over 31 500 hits, an increase of 19% over the previous year. Camden currently has an important exhibition based on the *Kings Cross Voices* project between 2004 and 2008, using oral history recordings collected during the project, along with photographs and artefacts. The exhibition runs until 26 September. It is also noted that the Centre has recently increased its opening hours.

Advertisers Riley Dunn and Wilson are proud to tell us that 2009 marks the centenary of their binding operations in Scotland. Based in Falkirk, the company has served libraries the length and breadth of the UK and beyond, providing library binding and rebinding services and book and paper conservation services. Since 2008 they have expanded their range of services to include the digital scanning and facsimile reproduction of local studies directories, records and maps. General Manager and Director of Conservation at Falkirk, John Penman, would like to thank all their customers for their continued support.

HAVE YOU SEEN?

Skelmersdale Bibliography. Compiled by staff from Skelmersdale Library. Lancashire County Library and Information Service, 2009. 43pp. £2.00. Available from Skelmersdale Library, Southway, Skelmersdale, WN8 6NL.

No large scale history of Skelmersdale has been published since 1970 so library staff have compiled this comprehensive bibliography to help fill the gap. It is laid out very clearly with a useful introduction which explains the arrangement of the book and what is, and is not, included. It uses the Lancashire County local studies classification scheme as a basis and a comprehensive index also allows searching by subject and authors' or editors' names. It is based on the holdings at Skelmersdale Library, but also gives advice on material held elsewhere, including the successor body to the Commission on New Towns as well as other record offices, libraries and

local history societies. It includes an outline description of other sources held at the library such as census, parish registers, photographs, newspapers and maps. An enormous amount of work has gone into this book picking up references to the town in a wide range of publications including journals and more general books about the area. Many references, especially to the early history of the town, are hidden away in these more general works and any serious researcher will be grateful to the compilers for their hard work. This book is a very useful starting point for anyone with an interest in Skelmersdale.

Alice Lock, *Tameside Libraries*

Azar Hussain, *Climbing the Family Tree. Refer, 25(2) Summer 2009, 20-23*

The CILIP Information Services Group held a successful seminar on family history in November 2008 under the leadership of John Hanson. It aimed to give librarians an overview of resources and materials available to those wishing to research in the subject. This is a useful report on the proceedings. It includes references and is well worth reading.

John Sheaf, *The Highways and Byways of Hampton: a short history of every street in Hampton. Borough of Twickenham Local History Society. 2009. 88pp. £3.50. £(4.00 incl post from BOTLHS c/o 4 Thames Street, Hampton, Middlesex TW12 2EA). [paper no.88]. ISBN 978 0 903341 81 3*

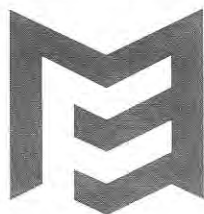
This booklet provides a short history of every street in Hampton. The boundaries are clearly defined and unlike some works of its type, while giving a good deal of historical information about older streets, it also records location and names of new streets right up to 2007: even though little information is given about recent streets, it provides a picture of the development of the area over the centuries. A wide variety of sources including parish records, census returns, directories, maps, electoral registers and books have been used. This is a useful factual account of the area likely to be of interest to local and family historians, at least as a starting point, and the sources noted will help in further study.

Stuart A. Raymond, *The census 1801-1911: a guide for the Internet era. Bury, Lancashire: the Family History Partnership, 2009. 52pp. £5.95. ISBN 978 1 906280 16 1. Stuart A. Raymond, Parish registers: a history and guide. Bury, Lancashire: the Family History Partnership, 2009. 52pp. £5.95. ISBN 978 1 906280 17 8.*

Two new books from the Family History Partnership make a very welcome addition to information resources for family historians. Their author, Stuart Raymond, has a commendable track record in producing authoritative and helpful guides to aspects of genealogy and these are no exception. The volume on parish registers clarifies the complexities of their history and what they contain. The narrative is clear and packed with useful examples to illustrate the text. He provides numerous fascinating snippets of information, as for example, in the eighteenth century half of all marriages in London were conducted in the Fleet Prison. The volume on the census follows a very similar pattern. Again basic historical information on the various censuses up to 1911 is given with clear outlines of the information they contain. Like the parish

registers booklet, the text is enlivened with numerous examples based on transcripts from census returns. Where both books score is in their careful analysis of common pitfalls in using the material and suggestions of alternative strategies to overcome the problems. Helpful lists of suitable websites give realistic indications of the likely costs that will be incurred. The books are supported by bibliographies for further reading. Both these modestly priced books offer, sound, realistic and eminently practical guidance through complex material. They should be at the fingertips of all those undertaking British family history research.

Diana Dixon, Southwold Museum



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