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Cover illustration: Briggate, looking North from the railway bridge, 1885. Courtesy of Local and Family History Library, Leeds City Libraries.

Editorial

The bulk of this issue is taken up by the papers presented at the Group's sessions at the Umbrella weekend in Leeds in July 1991. Many thanks to the contributors for supplying copies of their papers for publication: they have been edited as lightly as possible. As can be seen, they cover a wide range of topics related to local studies, including the international dimension: it was very pleasing to hear Assumpta Bailac talking about the situation of local studies in Spain. The Committee is anxious to maintain contact with colleagues abroad, so if anyone has any such contacts, do please let us know.

The Umbrella event as a whole was very successful, as was our part of it, and in view of this there is to be a similar Weekend School in July 1993, this time at Manchester University. The dates are July 9th - 11th. Preparations are already in hand for our sessions and the Committee is determined that the standard will be as high as that of the papers printed here. Although it seems a long time ahead, now is the time to start thinking about attending and asking for support. Those who were there last time felt that it was a worthwhile event both in terms of the papers presented and for the chance to make professional contacts. Although there was a reasonable number of LSG members there, there was plenty of room for more.

One other item of importance is to draw your attention to the note elsewhere about our quest for a volunteer to take on the treasurership of the Group. I'm sure that one of you could take it on successfully.

Your attention is also drawn to the contribution from the Open University about their proposed new course in local history. As they point out, students will be relying on local studies libraries a good deal during their course, and they are, therefore, anxious to consult local studies librarians at this stage of course planning. If anyone has any relevant comments to make, please do get in touch with them.

Local Studies and the Multicultural Community

Sheila Cooke

Several years ago, before ethnic community librarian posts, multicultural services panels and anti-racism practice training, the Local Studies Library at Nottingham was working out how to run an oral history project at Hyson Green - at one time a small village outside the town boundary but now so far from the city edges that it can be referred to in planning terms as inner city. It has an uncanny knack of getting media attention. Our staff on the spot, however, spoke of an excellent community spirit being dissipated by the demolition of a 1960s flats complex once mistaken by a visitor for a prison!

We did what all good librarians should: we consulted our stock. And very pathetic it turned out to be - all history or one-sided, one-coloured present day material. One quotation in particular depressed us. Would we really be 'unrepresentative whites talking to unrepresentative blacks'? We wondered if there was any chance that we could be relevant enough to that community not to be dismissed in this way.

Although local studies can be a suitably depressing backwater for a pessimist it offers enormous opportunities to the optimist and as I am one of the latter I soon pulled myself together and looked at the strengths that any local studies librarian has developed simply in order to do the job, all of which can be - indeed should be - applied over the whole of the community. When I came to the Nottingham Local Studies Library twenty five years ago it was usual to receive only forty personal enquiries per week, the stock was still somewhat book orientated and those enquiries related to 'history', old county families, churches, formal architecture, etc.

Now we receive over a hundred enquiries per day, the stock ranges over every type of material including the modern formats of cassette, video and microform, and people are studying their own family history, present day planning and community history. It has changed considerably because, as the needs and expectations of our community changed and expanded so did our collections and policies alter in order to meet the challenge that these changes presented. We know, therefore, that we have developed the ability to meet the demands of the new user and the greater expectations of our regulars.

The second ability that we have developed is that of searching out material. Within the ever-present financial constraints other service points are always having to choose. Local studies materials are not usually expensive in cash terms but they are expensive in the staff time it takes to scan the media, the periodicals and newsletters and to send out blanket begging letters on a particular subject area or aspect of local life. It takes time to achieve a balanced collection. Material on the black community or the travelling community or the still relatively silent majority - women - is buried even further than we are used to digging. As time available decreases it is necessary therefore to ensure that

whatever time is available is used to cover the whole community and that one area is not missed altogether. We must not be guilty of censorship by selection. Local studies is not now dependent on published material. We can only cover the distant past by collecting what has survived, but what has happened within living memory we can obtain. There are drawbacks to oral history but it is still the main balance to the discrimination of print. Other areas that we can cover include the use of photographs and the establishment of a publishing programme of our own.

Local studies librarians are very good at making and using contacts. All contact is good. The ways in which people find out about you are unfathomable and unpredictable, so keep talking to people - for instance in Nottingham we support our Black Women's History Group. Explaining why you are asking for materials is much more productive than just asking for them. Never be afraid to be brave and show your commitment. Some material we used in an exhibition was by local photographer John Birdsall and showed black youngsters in frank, not always flattering images - the black community was delighted.

Using user education and promotional methods are both major techniques. Local studies librarians talk to a lot of groups as well as individuals. When the school comes you have potential users for life. Make sure that the talk and the materials are fully representative. Make sure that you get the message of having materials on the whole community, for the whole community, across. This group is probably the only truly multicultural one you will ever contact: get them to trust us. At another service point they may offer perhaps a music activity or dance or painting session - sometimes seen by both black and white communities as rather superficial and neither making a lasting impression nor demanding any real involvement. Local studies has a tremendous advantage here because the local environment and its history has direct relevance to all the community.

When you promote make your effort work for you. Only a small proportion of the population hear you on radio, see your exhibitions or read what you say or what others say about you in the media. Make sure you are fair even if it means a bit of positive discrimination. In our women's exhibition we used more black images than population percentage would indicate but it ensured that the black community noticed that they were included. Remember your best promotion is always word of mouth by the satisfied user and your worst is the dissatisfied one - and the latter, it has been proved, tells more people than the former.

It is still often the case that local studies is not seen as part of the mainstream of community service. It is therefore important that you should show your commitment by being a useful member of any management team, service panel or working party that exists - and if you cannot do so cultivate a mouthpiece. In Nottinghamshire, Local Studies speaks directly through the Black Images annual promotion and the Multicultural Services panel and presents information to the Community Services panel. You should introduce yourself and become involved in two way discussions and projects with any members of staff appointed to reflect the needs of the ethnic communities. We are lucky in

Nottingham because our specialists are based on the same floor. This enables us to keep in close contact, show interest and support and obtain copies of their reports for stock.

Use the national system: don't re-invent the wheel - it is time consuming and you may produce an inferior version. Take advantage, for instance, of projects and publications from Birmingham or Bradford.

You need to be brave and get away from bureaucracy, but also, if possible, keep clear of internal community politics.

What about older, sensitive material? We put it into exhibitions and show it to visiting groups. They are interested, not offended. We cope with modern sensitive material by keeping it and using it. The interest is often from the ethnic communities themselves.

To integrate or not to integrate material? To produce material for promotion can be difficult if the stock is integrated. We do integrate, however, and use indexes and packages of duplicated material to cover the ethnic perspective. To be relevant to the library system we hold the 'archive' of the work that has been done, and the way the problem of becoming relevant to the ethnic communities has been tackled. Do we reflect, participate, or attempt to influence them? If we do our job well we can do all these.

Our greatest asset is that we like to talk to people, but we must also LISTEN.

Sheila Cooke is Head of Local Studies, Nottinghamshire County Libraries.

A Collecting Policy for Printed Ephemera: Some Contrasting United Kingdom Approaches

Michael Dewe

This paper is concerned with research on the subject of a collection policy for printed Welsh ephemera. Work on a two-year project will start in the near future with the aid of a grant from the Leverhulme Trust, and it seemed to me that a talk based on the substance of the application to the Trust, which included a brief look at what had been done in other parts of the United Kingdom, might form the basis of a suitable paper for this meeting.

Why I chose to select printed ephemera as a topic for research, however, is something that I am not absolutely clear about. Maybe, it is because I have been a collector of matchbox labels since the early 1950's. Or maybe it was the result of receiving a copy of a piece of recently discovered ephemera from a London colleague advertising the diary of my great grandfather. More probably, it was because, in spite of a fair amount of professional attention in recent years, printed ephemera is a potential problem area for librarians, particularly as regards acquisition, and one which has not always been viewed specifically from the local studies library perspective and certainly not within the context of Wales.

Ideally, it would have been better for someone to talk to you after that research had been carried out. Life does not work like that, however, and so I am going to talk about what it is hoped will be achieved in Wales, bearing in mind what has happened elsewhere in the United Kingdom, rather than what has actually been achieved by the project. Completion of the research might well provide me with a very different text for what I am going to say today and so my paper should be viewed in that rather tentative light. However, I hope that this conference, through questions, informal contacts and discussion, will provide an input that will help with the project's development.

Why collect printed ephemera?

One of the first problems to be addressed by the research is that of defining what is meant by printed ephemera, particularly in a local studies context, and that will be considered later in this paper. As a working definition I have adopted the Ephemera Society's 'the minor transient documents of everyday life', which, while we might argue about its exact meaning, does have brevity to recommend it.

As necessary as defining what is meant by printed ephemera, is the task of justifying its importance for acquisition and inclusion in the local studies collection. For anybody like myself, who has used ephemera in conducting historical research, its importance in contributing towards a detailed record of everyday life for a particular place will be obvious. In many instances the documents will have been created in the locality and the information they

contain may not be recorded elsewhere - for example, biographies of local people on election literature, or the programme for a local event describing who was to be present and what was to take place.

Acquisition of printed ephemera by local studies librarians and others is vital for other reasons. First, because its survival is unpredictable, unless it is collected as it appears and, secondly, because the 'collectability' of some ephemera may make it too expensive to acquire retrospectively. Many public libraries do, of course, acquire a variety of ephemera for the currency of its community or business information content and it is important that this be passed on to the local studies collection when it is out-of-date and no longer useful. However, this is only one strand for consideration in the formulation of a local collection policy for printed ephemera.

Not everybody sees printed ephemera in such a positive way, it must be said. Both historians and librarians may be disparaging about its historical worth—they may consider that not only its use but its value is transient. Once again, a more structured acquisition of printed ephemera might overcome these feelings, as the purpose and hence the value of what is collected is more clearly focused. In other words, collecting to an agreed plan should give the contents of a printed ephemera collection greater meaning.

What is printed ephemera?

Having briefly justified the collection of printed ephemera, the next step is to consider what the term means to librarians, and a preliminary part of the research project will be concerned with this issue. However, today I just want to make one or two points of interest.

First, that there are definitions of printed ephemera put forward by various writers and bodies, but none of these, I believe, have been framed purely from the local studies point of view. Secondly, in spite of these definitions, printed ephemera is still variously interpreted and may mean anything from tickets, timetables and leaflets of local pressure groups, to parish magazines. Thirdly, that investigations into ephemera and other forms of documentation have helped clarify, if not define, the term. These investigations now permit certain categories of material, such as local government publications, grey literature, and local or minor publications, to be excluded from consideration as printed ephemera. Minor or local publications, for example, such as newsletters and pamphlets, cannot be seen as truly ephemeral because they endeavour to make a contribution to local knowledge, even though not meriting collection nor bibliographical listing at the national level.

Similarly, certain formats, such as newspapers, pictorial postcards and sale catalogues, are often described as ephemera, particularly by non-librarians, but where they exist in quantity, as in a local studies collection, they are usually regarded as classes of material in their own right. Other ephemera, such as beer mats, cigarette cards, matchbox labels and stamps are usually considered the

province of the private collector or of specialist institutions, but some such items may well have a local significance and require acquisition for the local studies collection.

Given that the project is concerned with a collection policy for Wales, then some consideration will have to be given as to whether one definition of printed ephemera is applicable in all instances, to both the National Library of Wales and the local studies collections in public libraries, for instance.

Collection problems of printed ephemera

However, coming up with a usable definition for printed ephemera is a solution to only one of the problems surrounding the collection of that material. Another difficulty is the sheer amount that is available for acquisition if the local studies staff are proactive in their collecting. This gives rise to the question of possible selective acquisition and how this might be best carried out. A representative collection of bus tickets or every ticket that can be laid hands on? Other problems relate to the short-lived opportunity to acquire printed ephemera, and the many and varied sources that need regular checking for new material. A further problem is, that while libraries of all kinds may be considered the appropriate repositories for printed ephemera, other institutions, such as record offices and museums, and not forgetting private collectors, also acquire such material.

The physical nature and content of printed ephemera also poses other problems than acquisition, such as those relating to its storage, conservation and information retrieval.

Policy and Practice

All of these problems and issues suggest the need for libraries and other institutions to formulate details of policy and practice with regard to the acquisition, etc, of printed ephemera.

My impression is, however, that while libraries and other institutions collect ephemera, this is often done in a random and unplanned fashion, and without reference to each other. This does not address the systematic development of the collection, nor any of the other issues that have been outlined earlier. It is this lack of a collection policy which is at the heart of the research project that I am sketching out for you today.

Collecting printed ephemera; some United Kingdom solutions

I would not wish to give the impression that little work or thought has gone into the question of the collection of printed ephemera, as this is not the case. What initiatives that have been taken, however, have occurred largely at the national level and stem from the activities of the British Library and the National Library of Scotland; I will consider the National Library of Wales separately in due course.

To put the matter in perspective, it is worthwhile referring to the first piece of research in the ephemera field, that carried out by John Pemberton, then of Warwick University Library, and published in 1971 as *The national provision of printed ephemera in the social sciences*. Although basically concerned with the social sciences, Pemberton's conclusions significantly influenced the general development of the acquisition and exploitation of printed ephemera through two of his major recommendations.

- The creation of a National Documents Library as a section of the then British Museum Library.
- The compilation of a National Register of Collections by the proposed National Documents Library.

The first suggestion was not pursued by the British Library but by the National Library of Scotland: the second was investigated in some detail over a long period of time by the British Library before coming to the conclusion that it was not a worthwhile venture.

While the British Library's involvement with the exploitation of existing resources of printed ephemera is of considerable merit and importance, in the interest of time and the focus of this paper, I will only describe in detail the work of the National Library of Scotland in this area.

Although collecting ephemera for some years like most United Kingdom national libraries, the National Library of Scotland only adopted a policy on the collection and treatment of current Scottish ephemera in 1985. While following one of the published definitions of printed ephemera, it has been said that in practice this leads to the collection of an enormously wide range of items, some of which might not be considered as really ephemeral. The collection is expected to grow at the rate of about 8,000 items a year, occupying about 29 acid-free boxes.

The costs of acquisition and maintenance of the collection have been kept to a minimum, as acquisition is carried out by unpaid local agents and library staff, and boxing and cataloguing has utilised Manpower Services Commission staff, although these are now no longer available.

The National Library of Scotland was to review its ephemera policy in 1990, when attention was to be given to three elements: selective collecting; costing; and how far parts of the collections might be more appropriate to museums. It will be interesting to examine the result of this review as part of the Welsh project. What is not known about this national library collection is how much it duplicates (or indeed conflicts with) the work of Scottish local studies libraries. Once again this is an issue that will need to be explored in relation to proposals for Wales.

One initiative that should have affected the collection of printed ephemera, particularly at the local level, was the joint statement relating to archives by the

Library Association, Museums Association and Society of Archivists issued in 1981. This considered collecting overlap and also problems relating to photographic, sound archive, and printed ephemera collections. The statement, while describing the situation and emphasising legal responsibilities, argues for close collaboration and liaison on a variety of matters at the local level, rather than any radical changes to the present collecting situation. It will be interesting to try to monitor the effect of this statement, if any, on the present situation in Wales.

The situation in Wales

The present situation as regards collection policy and practice in respect of printed ephemera in Wales is largely unknown. As might be expected, many local studies collections in Wales acquire printed ephemera, but two sample authorities indicate that they have no collecting policy for it. The situation in respect of record offices and museums has not been explored even in this limited way, although formal and informal visits indicate its existence in those institutions.

While the British Library explored the potential of Pemberton's recommendations to compile a register of collections, and the National Library of Scotland implemented the idea of creating a central collection, the National Library of Wales has not, as yet, sought to influence the collection of printed ephemera in Wales. The National Library of Wales itself has no formal collecting machinery for ephemera, though it does receive a substantial sample of such material from a variety of sources. This may be acquired by any of the library's three curatorial departments, namely printed books, manuscripts and records, and pictures and maps. The material is acquired by legal deposit, donation by interested individuals, and by the library staff during visits to the National Eisteddfod, the Royal Welsh Show and tourist information centres. Some also arrives with more substantial publications from the publishers. The library has a Welsh Political Archive, which collects election leaflets and similar printed materials.

As indicated earlier, unlike other parts of the United Kingdom, the question of the collection of printed ephemera has not been formally addressed in Wales and no clear picture of the present situation exists which might assist future developments and improvements. Obviously progress could be made with the collection of printed ephemera if such a picture could be created, and if a national collecting policy for libraries could be formulated with due regard given to other institutions, such as record offices and museums. Not only would this help with the planned and systematic collection of printed ephemera in Wales, but it would also combat problems of possible gaps in coverage and of duplication.

Creating such a picture would be the initial stage in the project I have been describing, which, it should be made clear, would be concerned with printed ephemera in both the English and the Welsh languages; much will exist as bilingual documents.

The project

The overall aim of the project is to make recommendations to libraries and other institutions in Wales that will assist in the formulation of a national collection policy for printed Welsh ephemera. This will be done by:

- investigating the current situation, particularly in respect of public library local studies collections;
- (b) examining questions of acquisition policy, such as the nature of the material, subject/format coverage, comprehensive or selective acquisition, the needs of current and potential users;
- (c) considering questions of rationalisation and co-operation in Wales, for example, the role of the National Library of Wales. In other words, the project will look at the question as to what is best collected nationally and locally by libraries and what might be the role of record offices, museums and others in the field of printed ephemera;
- (d) giving some indication of current problems and practices with respect to the cataloguing and indexing, storage, access, conservation, and exploitation of printed ephemera, as such information can be collected in brief at the same time as the main issue of acquisition is under consideration.

Conclusion

I have tried to demonstrate that, in spite of commendable recent research publications, and practical initiatives in the field of printed ephemera, there is still much that might be usefully done, particularly in Wales, to improve on its acquisition by libraries, particularly local studies libraries.

The relatively small scale of the proposed research in Wales, i.e. in terms of the number of libraries and other institutions involved, perhaps augurs well for a successful outcome. Its results and recommendations may well be valuable for libraries and other institutions outside Wales.

I believe it is possible through this research to improve the quality of what is achieved by way of the collection of printed ephemera in Wales through an appropriate policy statement, and I am also confident that it will be possible to affect questions of rationalisation, co-operation and co-ordination, and thus to influence the nature and direction of future developments to the benefit of users and collectors.

 Pemberton, JE The national provision of printed ephemera in the social sciences. A report for the Social Science and Government Committee of the Social Science Research Council, Warwick University, 1971.

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Co-operation in Northern Ireland: Local Studies provision and the providers.

John Killen

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen.

The subject of my talk today is co-operation in Northern Ireland: and that strikes me as ironic in the week in which the inter-party talks on the political future of Northern Ireland have once again come to such an abrupt and uninspiring halt. It is perhaps a salutary reminder that co-operation to be effective requires the active good will of all parties concerned.

We are here concerned however with local studies provision and providers in Northern Ireland and the degree to which co-operation exists - or does not exist - between them. Let me explain briefly the situation as it exists today.

Northern Ireland is roughly the same size as Yorkshire. It comprises some 5462 square miles - or if you prefer 1,348,261 hectares. It has a population of some 1.5 million people, residing in cities, towns, villages and the countryside. Its capital is the city of Belfast with a population of one-third of a million people.

Over the last twenty to thirty years there has been a marked increase in interest in local studies throughout the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland has been no exception in this respect. That interest has been given added impetus by the reforms in the educational system - increasingly school-children are being asked to undertake projects which involve research into their local community. Colleges of higher education and even the universities have also accepted the importance of local studies. This interest must be catered for.

Who then are the providers of material for local studies in Northern Ireland? Traditionally, the libraries have been the first port of call but other institutions are also being heavily used by researchers. Public library provision in Northern Ireland was reformed in 1973 when the old County Library system was abolished and in its place were created five Education and Library Boards. The largest is based in Belfast and the others are in the North, South, East and West of the province. Each library board has a local history department whose remit is to collect all the printed material relating to that area; and also to collect generally in the field of Irish Studies. In addition, the Linen Hall Library has always seen its role as collecting extensively in the field of Irish and local studies. The printed word, therefore, is largely the remit of the libraries.

The Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, set up by Act of Parliament in 1923, is the major collector and repository for the manuscript history of Northern Ireland. From the beginning it collected not just the parliamentary archive of the Province, but also business, family and estate records.

The Ulster Museum which can trace an existence back to 1793, is the premier museum in the province and has a national, not just a local, importance. It has its own departmentalised library and a local history department which deals with printing, paintings, shipping, linen etc. The Down Museum and the Armagh Museum are county museums - much smaller but run on the same lines as the Ulster Museum with libraries, photographic collections, and artefacts.

The Ulster Folk and Transport Museum was formed by Act of Parliament in 1958 and was the brainchild of its first director George Thompson, and the writer, folklorist and teacher Estyn Evans. It has its own specialised library, an educational department and myriad artefacts that illustrate the folk ways of past generations.

Queen's University of Belfast was founded in 1849 and has built up a sizeable collection of local material both printed and manuscript, while the University of Ulster, also, in its short existence has built up an important local collection. The acquisition by the latter of the papers of the poet John Hewitt is just one example.

These then are the main providers of material for the study of local history in Northern Ireland. The question is how effectively are their efforts co-ordinated, and what co-operation exists?

The inter-lending of books between institutions is a basic form of co-operation and something that we can all readily understand. But local studies co-operation in Northern Ireland goes much further.

In 1974 the Northern Ireland branch of the Library Association and the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland proposed the establishment of a joint working party which would promote co-operation between all institutions involved in local studies. This working party first met in August 1975 and its membership has grown to include the five area boards, the two universities, the museum, the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland and the Linen Hall Library.

From the beginning the working party sought to achieve positive results as well as to promote co-operation and the exchange of ideas and information. Foremost among its successes has been the Checklist of Northern Ireland Newspapers which was published in 1979. This lists all papers published in the six counties of Northern Ireland, and those institutions which have various runs of each title. It has quickly become the bible in this area of research - James O'Toole, co-ordinator of the Newsplan project for the whole of Ireland, could not fault it. Co-operative microfilming of certain local newspapers has been successfully undertaken and similar lists of local maps, directories and Council minutes are in preparation.

One of the most useful and imaginative schemes which the working party has promoted is the secondment for a year to the Public Record Office of teachers involved in curriculum development; and for a month at a time of local history specialists from a number of libraries. This has allowed them to become familiar

with PRONI holdings and systems; and has created a greater awareness of the manuscript sources for local studies.

The working party meets four times a year and a pattern has emerged where alternate meetings are addressed by specialists such as conservators, scholars, archivists, curators, librarians and historians.

In 1980 it was felt that purely library matters were in danger of being submerged among the other work of the working party, and to rectify this a second group was begun. This comprised local history librarians only and it continues to meet in the morning of the same day as the parent working party meets. This second group is responsible for the publication of a joint bibliography of local studies material acquired by the five area boards with contributions from the Linen Hall Library, the Ulster Museum, the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum and the Ulster American Folk Park. To date there have been 31 issues of this joint bibliography, the Northern Ireland Bibliography, and its value to local research has been enormous.

In the wider community, to encourage the publication of works of local history, the collections of the different institutions have always been made accessible to researchers and publishers. As a result there has been a steady stream of high quality books published on many aspects of the local history of Northern Ireland; and a market has been created which has allowed the formation of new and vigorous publishing houses. One area of positive co-operation between the publishers and these institutions is the book launch. No facility fee is charged to a local publisher who wishes to launch his/her book in, say, the Ulster Museum or Linen Hall Library.

Close contacts with publishers of local newspapers can result in important acquisitions to a library or museum. Storage can be a problem for the publisher, and an institution, by offering accommodation, may gain access to an important local history archive. There is the added attraction of access to the newspaper's in-house index, if such exists. In this way the Linen Hall Library acquired in the early 1970's a long run of the Belfast Telegraph - a newspaper much used by researchers.

Our most important area of co-operation should always be with our users. They are the people to whom all this activity is geared. By enthusiastically meeting their needs and encouraging their research we sustain those at the coal face of local studies.

That then is a brief resume of the situation as it exists in Northern Ireland. It must be remembered however that this co-operation is relatively new and is still developing. Mistakes can and have been made along the way - and quite serious mistakes. For instance, the original local studies joint bibliography contained entries from the five Education and Library Boards only; other institutions were excluded. This was a major defect and restricted its usefulness. When the matter was raised and the suggestion made that the Linen Hall Library and the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum participate the chiefs of the area boards were

reluctant to accept the proposition: it took a concerted campaign on the part of these institutions to be allowed to input information into the joint bibliography. Now the bibliography is as comprehensive as it can be and the logic of all institutions participating is no longer questioned.

Again, it is only in the past six months that a representative of the Federation for Ulster Local Studies has been invited to attend the working party. As the umbrella group for all the local history societies in the North of Ireland it was a long overdue invitation.

More serious is the situation concerning the Irish language. All the area boards plus the Linen Hall Library have collections of Irish language material and there is a real and identified body of interest in this subject. Those librarians who look after these collections have sought to come together to exchange information and to produce finding lists and bibliographies to help themselves and their users. To date they have received little encouragement to do so from the area boards, and more worryingly, little from the joint working party. This situation needs to be addressed and positive encouragement given. I have no doubt that a sensible way forward can be achieved: but it will take time. As you can see a system of effective co-operation exists but we must always seek to make it better: complacency can be and is very damaging.

I shall end with two instances of practical co-operation which occurred in the last three months. I was asked to look at the books of a lady in Bangor, County Down. She was moving house and could not take them with her. When I got there she had other things more appropriate for museum display which she could not take. In the end a Royal Irish Constabulary duty book was passed on to the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, a cobbler's last to the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, a set of ceremonial spurs to the Ulster Museum: and a set of books to the Linen Hall Library.

A month later I was able to borrow for an exhibition currently running in the Linen Hall Library a journal of a visit to America in 1869/70 from the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, American Indian artefacts from the Ulster Museum and an American Atlas from Queen's University Belfast. Co-operation really has positive benefits.

Local History Teaching and the National Curriculum: implications for the Library Service

Geoffrey Timmins

Introduction

The National Curriculum requires that, for the first time, all primary schools must teach local history, both as a subject in its own right and to illustrate aspects of national history. At secondary level, too, there is encouragement to teach local history, though compulsion to do so is avoided. This has obvious implications for local studies librarians and the main purpose of this paper is to examine ways in which they may respond effectively to meet teachers' needs.

The National Curriculum and local history

Local history is not defined precisely in the National Curriculum. Supplementary guidance, however, makes clear that it can be pitched at regional or sub-regional level. Thus, the impact of the 1870 Education Act on, say, the West Midlands, would be a suitable topic for children to study. In the junior (7-11) years, designated as Key Stage 2, pupils are required to undertake one unit of local history, equivalent to about a term's work in history. If they so wish, they can undertake two such units. Altogether, nine units of history work are required at this Key Stage. The majority, known as core units, relate to British history and have their content specified. The remainder are termed supplementary units and deal with local history; the study of a non-European society; and a long-term theme, which must cover a period of at least a thousand years.

The local history units may be of three types. The first is a short-period unit, which might deal with a theme such as the impact of World War II on a locality. The second is the study of a theme over a long period, such as the development of local transport. The third type links with one of the core units. Thus, aspects of the content specified for the unit on Victorian Britain might be explored at local level. It should also be noted that the local study must deal with important issues and must relate to more general developments.

Attainment targets and statements of attainment

The National Curriculum specifies three attainment targets in history, namely historical knowledge and understanding: interpretations of history; and the use of historical sources. The aim is to encourage children to use historical sources rather than merely to digest historical information.

As in every subject, ten levels of competence (statements of attainment) are specified within each attainment target. For instance, at level one within the

third attainment target, a child is required to extract information from an historical source. To achieve this, a child might look at an illustration of a person in Victorian dress and respond "there is a person in the picture". Level two requires the extraction of information from an historical source in relation to an historical question. Here, the child might look at the same picture and be asked what it tells us about the dress worn by Victorian people. The response "they wore hats" would reach level 2; the response that the picture shows gas lamps would not. To reach the next level, children are required to make inferences. For instance, they might infer that it was uncomfortable to travel on stagecoaches for those passengers who sat outside. The overall aim behind these statements of attainment is to face children with ever more demanding tasks as they mature and therefore to achieve progression in learning.

Implications for library services

Libraries hold much of the local history material that teachers will require. Copies of old photographs and other illustrations will be particularly useful for younger children to use, whilst such written texts as public health reports and census data will prove ideal for older age groups.

Local studies librarians will be accustomed to approaches from teachers seeking local material for classroom use. Such approaches may well be from knowledgeable enthusiasts, who are already aware of the teaching potential that local history can offer. Increasingly, however, librarians can expect requests from teachers who have no experience of local history work and who will require a considerable amount of advice. It may be useful, therefore, to consider the type of initiatives that Lancashire Polytechnic and the Lancashire County Library Service have undertaken in order to grapple with this problem.

Essentially, two approaches have been adopted. The first has been to organise a series of in-service training sessions. These have been held at different libraries and have adopted a common structure. To begin with, the County Local Studies Librarian has provided an overview of the sources available through the library service, dealing with problems of access to material, as well as possibilities. Her colleagues from the local libraries concerned have then discussed their own local collections, working with groups of teachers. Finally, Polytechnic staff have considered how local source material may be used in schools to meet National Curriculum requirements. Each course has occupied a single session and has taken place between 4.00 pm and 8.00 pm in order to overcome the problems of supply teacher cover. Each course member is supplied with a pack of photocopied material drawn from the collection of the host library.

The programme is income-generating, any surplus revenue being shared equally between the Library Service and the Polytechnic. The Polytechnic deals with the advertising, enrolment and financial administration of the course. The library has also organised a bookstall at each course, earning useful revenue from the sale of its own publications. Although income generation is not the main reason for running the courses, it offers an attractive bonus in the present climate.

The second initiative has been the publication of out-of-copyright material which schools find particularly valuable, most notably Ordnance Survey and early county maps. These also sell to the public at large. The aim has been to reproduce these maps to a high standard, making use of the Polytechnic's process camera. Unless high quality is achieved, children are not likely to find these sources appealing. Nor will they be able to use them effectively in meeting National Curriculum requirements. Once more, this is a joint activity between the Library Service and the Polytechnic and a profit-sharing arrangement operates. Further initiatives in this area are planned, including packs of source material relating to such themes as public health and transport.

The main benefit arising from these joint initiatives is that teachers are able to draw on the varied skills available within the Library Service and the Polytechnic. Without the input of either organisation, the work undertaken would be far less convincing and teachers would be less well placed to meet the demands being made upon them.

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Local Studies in Catalonia, Spain

Assumpta Bailac

When I was first asked to take part in your Weekend School my first reaction was, through nervousness, to refuse. However, the idea of sharing ideas and experiences of local studies proved too strong, so I agreed. I shall be covering two aspects: how our local studies group was born and its contribution to the topic, and I shall also deal with the situation of local studies in public libraries in Spain - or more particularly in Catalonia.

Catalan librarians and documentalists organise themselves in conducting their professional affairs through various groups, much like IFLA Divisions. One of these is the Public Library Group, and this in its turn has different Boards dealing with specific topics. The Local Studies Group is one of these boards, and was founded in 1987 to provide a unified viewpoint for dealing with this area of librarianship. One aim was to provide guidelines for the organisation of collections. These will be dealt with shortly.

However, when we started work on these guidelines we realised that we needed to know more about the realities of local studies work before producing our document, and we decided that it was necessary to do a survey: this provided the only information available about local studies in the public libraries of Catalonia, as there had been no previous work done.

The survey

When the Board for Local Studies was formed as a section of the Public Library Group we decided to carry out the survey. It was sent out to the Central Library Services who distributed the questionnaire among the public libraries and collected the information. Overall there are 337 libraries in Catalonia considered to be public libraries, and the questionnaire was sent to 316 of them. 180 libraries, or 57%, sent returns, and we felt that the results may be considered representative of the situation of local studies collections in Catalonia. Of the libraries responding, 71% served populations of under 25,000, 18% between 25,000 and 100,000, and 6% between 100,000 and 500,000. Only 4% served populations greater than this.

Of those responding, 89% have a local studies collection, but none have a member of staff working exclusively in local studies. Most libraries cover their City area, although about a third cover also the region round about - particularly where the city concerned is the capital of the region, or where there are few other libraries. Some libraries collect only for the district concerned where it has a historic and cultural personality of its own.

Local studies collections were mostly started in the 1970's and 1980's, by which time libraries were becoming aware of the importance of local material. The majority of local studies collections are based on donations and do not have a budget of their own. This creates problems with acquisition, storage conditions etc, and also explains why libraries have difficulties in improving their local collections. Even so, in the majority of places the local studies section is growing. As far as types of material are concerned, a very wide range of formats is collected, although audio-visual material is not very common.

94% of responding libraries have separate local studies catalogues, and 63% also include local studies material in the general library catalogue. Generally, a special classification scheme is not used. A high proportion of respondents said that their collections were used for research, and the service provided is basically reference only. Only when there are duplicates is material lent out. Photocopies are provided when the library possesses a photocopier and where the physical characteristics of the material allows it. Responses show that 22% of libraries have problems in classification, 38% with storage conditions, and 25% in cataloguing. The Group, however, feels that these percentages do not reflect the real difficulties, and deduce that those libraries which work hardest with their local collections are the ones who find the most difficulties. A major problem is caused by the need to store materials of various physical forms, and a further problem is that lack of staff obliges libraries to collect material without being able to look after it properly.

Two thirds of the respondents cooperate with other bodies. By far the commonest relationship is between the library and the local archives and museums. Only a quarter of the libraries do any special activities to publicise their collections: the commonest activity is organising exhibitions.

An analysis of the survey results leads to some general considerations about local studies collections in Catalan libraries. It is necessary to consider local studies as part of the public library as a whole as well as being a specific department, because local studies departments suffer from the same problems as the main library - lack of staff, reduced budgets, small buildings etc. It is also necessary to look at the role that the local studies section plays in the general purpose of the public library. The survey results suggest that it depends on the willingness of the staff to organise a local studies collection. Another point to bear in mind is that local studies collections only appeared in Catalonia in the 1970's. The results also show that local studies collections in Catalonia are concerned more with preservation than with community information - this can be seen by looking at the type of material collected.

There are some common features in the organisation of local collections, but these are the result of experience and intuition rather than because there is a standard. It is recognised that, depending on the geographical area, each collection will have its own special features.

From the survey it was decided that it was necessary to construct guidelines for local studies collections in Catalonia in order to help public libraries to organise their collections. While we were preparing them we got to know about the British Guidelines and analysed these and took them into account: in my comments on our Guidelines I shall also indicate points of agreement and disagreement with yours.

The Guidelines

The main points of our Guidelines are as follows:

I. Aims

The aim of the guidelines is to assist librarians in the organisation of library materials covering a specific geographical area: the intention is not to establish rigid criteria for documentary processing. The present situation of local studies and the lack of staff which Catalan libraries suffer is also taken into account.

The local studies section in a public library needs to define closely the area covered: it may be a district, a village, a whole city, or a region. The existence of other libraries with collections may help to define the area. The institution responsible for the main collection should be the one offering the best conditions for both use and preservation of material, but other libraries may also have local studies collections of their own. The purpose of the local studies section is to collect, preserve, organise and use any kind of material considered useful for the study of the area, regardless of whether it refers to the past, the present, or the future.

2. Materials

We follow the IFLA recommendations that no forms of material should be excluded. Thus printed material, photographs, slides, charts, audio and visual recordings should be collected and be preserved for ever. Other physical forms such as kits or three dimensional items will be collected depending on the financial resources, the staff, or the space left in the library. No material on a local subject will be excluded, though libraries will make their own decisions on works written by local authors but without local subject matter, and on works printed or published in the area. Thus all subjects and all forms of information will be collected, and the Guidelines provide a list of material considered essential arranged by the Decimal Classification.

3. Organising the material

All materials collected in the local studies collection will be accessioned with the exception of press clippings and subject dossiers made up by the library. The purpose of the dossiers is to gather documentation from different sources which deal with the subject. It may help to keep two different accessions registers, one for printed material, the other for audio-visual.

For cataloguing material, the recommended rules to be followed for the description of local studies material are those of the ISBD, especially the third level option. Entries for documents in the library catalogues should follow chapters 21-28 of the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules. As far as classification is concerned, it is best to follow the same scheme as is used in the library generally. Local studies materials may be distinguished by the letters LS preceding the class number. There may be problems in deciding whether works by local authors should be in the local studies collection or not: if so, they will be classified at 012, while if they are in the general library collection they will be classified by subject. Press cuttings and subject dossiers will not be classified by DC: they may be arranged alphabetically by subject. It is not necessary to introduce new indexing systems to deal with local studies materials, although sometimes there may be a need for more specific treatment, for instance new headings for local subjects or different geographical headings.

Local studies materials have to be included in the catalogues of the library to which they belong, but the section may also have a catalogue of its own. The dictionary catalogue appears to be the most suitable since it includes everything in alphabetical order. For local studies use there needs to be a classified catalogue as well.

4. Accommodation

Local studies collections should be placed in a separate room or an area away from the rest of the library's materials, but always in an open access section. The different formats will require special conditions of conservation and storage.

5. Reader services

One of the main aims of the local collection is to supply as much information as possible about the history of the community, including information about material held in other libraries. As far as the present is concerned, the public library ought to be able to give information about social events and activities taking place.

Materials in the local collection should be available for loan as with any other stock of the library, though some material may need to be for reference only. Where there is only one copy, it is desirable to make a photocopy to prevent the risk of loss.

Information about local studies collections should be distributed as widely as possible, for instance through publicity in local newspapers of the provision of readers' guides or information sheets. Encouragement of research based on the collection will also help publicise it. For students, librarians should produce subject dossiers and portfolios.

It is essential that libraries co-operate with other local institutions to avoid duplication of effort. Documents from archives and museums, as well as from other libraries, will complement the collection. The public library's local collection and these other centres should collaborate to provide information about the community they serve.

The Guidelines compared

It is clear that we all consider it indispensable to co-operate with other organisations such as archives and museums, though in our guidelines we omit museums since libraries do not collect three dimensional objects. We agree that it is essential to work together with the local authority. We also agree with the necessity for establishing guidelines for collections in relation to material to collect and the geographical area to cover. Ways of acquisition of material are basically the same, including donations, and we agree about the most important types of material which provide information. We also agree about the importance of establishing criteria for the works of local authors: we have opted for selective representation.

Local studies collections in Catalan public libraries have few audio-visual materials, so our guidelines do not go deeply into the subject, although we recognise that they are important materials to be considered. One difference in our guidelines from yours is the question of using a special classification for the local collection. In Catalonia, libraries use the same classification scheme as the rest of the library, only adding the prefix LC.

The distance becomes greater between Britain and Catalonia when services to readers are discussed - Britain has a much longer tradition. We can hardly think of any library with a publications policy, even for local studies, though there are individual initiatives to publish guides to local studies or on specific types of

material. One point which has struck us is the close relationship between the local studies library and the reference library in Britain. When we developed our guidelines we considered local collections as completely separate from the rest of the library but we agree that the links should be close so that the community can benefit. We coincide in agreeing about the importance of preservation and storage of local studies material. If we do not preserve it in good condition it will not be available for use in the future.

Case study: a public library in Barcelona

Finally, let me offer you an example of a local studies collection in Catalonia. Gracia is now a Barcelona district of 140,000 people. It is an area of the city with a distinctive character. It was in fact a city with its own Town Council from 1820 to 1823 and from 1850 to 1877, when it joined Barcelona again. When Barcelona carried out its decentralisation programme and divided the city into ten districts, the sixth district, Gracia, included the old city and some of the surrounding quarters. Its own cultural identity has always been important and there are many local documents and other items about the community. When we started to organise our local studies library, the first thing to do was to define the geographical limits, and we decided to cover the old town area of Gracia for historical materials and the administrative area for current documents.

We collect all materials, regardless of form, relating to the area whatever its point of view, including material concerned with life and activities in Gracia and documents with information about well-known local people. We select some works of local authors where the subject is not about the area, but we do not collect works merely printed in Gracia. Novels, poems and theatrical works set in the area are collected, as are newspapers and magazines if they are issued by local organisations. Sections of general books which refer specifically to Gracia are also held. For organising the stock we use the same classification scheme and list of headings as the rest of the library. We have produced our local collection catalogues in duplicate, and have done two guides from our material about typical festivals in our area.

After ten years of existence, we have realised that the main problem is to get a local collection which covers the area exhaustively. This is because of the great quantity of material produced in the district, lack of space in the library, and lack of staff to take care of it - common problems in most local studies sections. We are also aware that some local associations also have documents about local history, duplicating our efforts and dispersing materials. Moreover we are afraid that documents have been and are being lost. During a meeting about cultural associations in Gracia we planned an initiative which we hoped would help us in the future. This has the following aims: to find out about the materials which each association or group has; to decide, working together, who, how and what material will be collected in the future; and to claim the Public Library as a centre for information about the community.

This initiative has been planned in three stages. The first is to take stock of all material to tell us what material there is and who it belongs to. The public library

could co-ordinate this process. The second stage, which depends on the first, is to arrange for every group, institution or association to take charge of a particular kind of material from now onwards, while the third stage is to look for a system to input our information and add to it in the future. During this stage we shall also have to draw up rules for dealing with and preserving materials. This is all because of one clear fact: the dispersion of material, which is increasing in big cities because of, as mentioned before, lack of resources and space in the public libraries.

We ought not to give too much emphasis to the need of keeping all material in a single collection. What we have to think of is a collection of material about an area. What is important is the knowledge of what material there is and where we can find it and then co-operate in collecting new material. In this context public libraries can continue to be the main part of the plan for the local collection of a community.

In conclusion, here are some of the ideas which were in the minds of local administrators and in those of library professionals in Catalonia in talking about local studies libraries. First, that the public library is an active information centre situated in a particular place and interested in serving it, and that a local studies library is an important department within it. Secondly, that we must not forget that we are concerned with both past and present, and thirdly that it is important in every area that the public libraries should co-operate with associations and other organisations which have local collections.

We in Spain are sure that your long experience can be useful to us, and we hope that ours has been of interest and value to you. Thank you for listening to me.

Assumpta Bailac is a Librarian, Biblioteca Publica de Gracia, Barcelona, and a member of the Executive Board of the Library Association of Catalonia.

Open Forum

Due to the unavoidable absence of one of the scheduled speakers the Group fell back on the old stand-by, an open session with a panel to start the proceedings off. The audience participated fully and this is a brief summary, compiled by the Editor of the main topics discussed. For the record the panel members were Patrick Baird of Birmingham Public Libraries, David Cousins of Kent County Library, Ian Jamieson of Newcastle Polytechnic Department of Information and Library Management, and Philippa Stevens of Hampshire County Library. The chairman was Joe Fisher of Glasgow.

Two main general themes emerged during the session. These were local studies libraries and the community, and interlibrary co-operation. The proceedings were started by a questioner asking the panel to give its views on the main theme of the Group's sessions during the weekend - going out into the community. Ian Jamieson spoke from the point of view of education and emphasised his intention of sending his students out with the message that local studies is part of library outreach and that for instance branch librarians ought to be involved in local studies in their community. The aim is not necessarily to produce local studies librarians per se, but people with an awareness of its importance to the community, and to cover the possibilities of activities such as oral history and photographic surveys as well as the basic organisation and exploitation of collection. Philippa Stevens emphasised the importance of publicity and promotion. Examples given included attendance at local history fairs, thereby attracting casual passers-by, and taking exhibitions to meetings of local organisations such as the Hampshire Field Club. Patrick Baird also dealt with the importance of promotion, providing various examples from Birmingham. including the provision of accommodation in branch libraries and the hosting of the West Midlands Library Fair, whose attendance has increased from 2000 to 9000 in four years. The development of the People of Birmingham Project was also dealt with, its aim being to acquire material and information from people living in the city, particularly those from the ethnic communities. Community librarians are helping with this project. A further development is the local history van, giving people, mainly in the inner city, the chance to see librarians and to talk: the van is equipped with audio and video recording equipment as well as a scanner allowing photographs to be added to the library's database. Voluntary staff are helping with the van project. The library was also instrumental in helping to form the Birmingham and District Association of Local History Societies and in establishing the twice-yearly journal The Birmingham Historian.

Co-operation had already been mentioned and the next questioner asked specifically about this aspect of local studies librarianship. The success of the annual Local History Week in Scotland was mentioned. Here all public libraries mount events during a specific week and this attracts a good deal of national publicity and improves the image of local studies collections. The point was made that local studies is local, and that all counties have their own budgets to collect material within their own locality, so the essential thing is to know who are the experts on other localities and be able to contact them for help. The value

of looking at things regionally, when trends may appear which are not apparent at local level, was also pointed out. An example of problems of co-operation in publication over a large area was the publication of the Northern Bibliography. which foundered because it was said to cover too large an area to appeal to the local historian, while it needed to cover this area to generate sales. A more successful example of co-operation from the north east is that local studies librarians from North Yorkshire to Northumberland and Cumbria meet twice a year to discuss matters of mutual interest. One of their activities at present is the preparation of a list of directories covering the area. Interestingly the group started as an initiative of the Northern Municipal and County Chief Librarians. and the group reports back to them. A different kind of experience in Walsall, where librarians met to try to formulate a publications policy, and to help each other, was described, but this failed because specifically local budgeting made it impossible. The point was made that while the old comment 'what's in it for me?' still applies, co-operation is in people's own hands - they must go out and speak to other people.

The question then arose of potential conflict between conservation of material offered to libraries and the need to make it available locally; with the arguments of the scholar for a centralised collection and the needs of the local inhabitant for local access, how might some of the problems be attacked? The first suggestion was that material should be copied - the practice in Birmingham is that material offered to a branch should be sent to the main collection, with a copy being made for the branch, unless the donor requests that the item be retained locally, in which case the reverse applies. One problem here is of preservation - while the library's conservation unit will help, if material is to be held in the local library, the cost of conservation will have to come from that library's bookfund. Another suggestion was to co-operate with local history societies by offering to house the society's collection in the library. There was an immediate comment about the danger of the society withdrawing its material, leaving the library without much of a collection, and the idea of a contract was suggested. As an example the current situation in Kent was described. Formerly there was one central collection, which has now been amalgamated with the County Archives Office to form the Centre for Kentish Studies, but the general situation now is that all major libraries with a professional librarian in charge should have their own local collections, and material offered to them would stay there, provided it is of relevance. The main problems arise in small libraries where it may not be feasible to keep a few items on their own. A further problem with donations was mentioned - that of keeping everything that is offered and perhaps pressure from the donor to maintain or display it. One speaker suggested that it might be better to borrow items for copying so that at least the information can be available, rather than accept a whole collection, some of which may not be particularly relevant. There is a need to beware of promising too much in order to acquire some material.

A different kind of problem was mentioned here - that if material is put into branch libraries patrons will assume that they can borrow it, and if they cannot, will not use it at all. The lending of materials, of course, introduces the problem

of wear and tear, given that most material is out of print: some copies must always be preserved in the central collection.

Another questioner made the point that a major problem in collections, given the varied formats of stock and the fact that there is often a lack of indexes, is of making sure that the stock is organised for use, and asked if there were any real answers - computerisation in many libraries is still far away. The first respondent argued strongly that there is no substitute for the human brain in knowing where to look and in bringing suitable items together, and that staff knowledge is therefore of fundamental importance. This was countered by the mention of difficulties which arise when such specialist staff leave, retire or go on holiday: it is essential that records must be set down in some form so that other staff can deal with enquiries. One clear answer here is to provide good staff training. It was commented that in some ways local history collections can become victims of their own success in that the more successful they are in acquiring material, the more problems are created in processing it in terms of cataloguing and indexing. The fact that there is no generally accepted classification scheme does not help. There was general agreement that there has to be reliance on staff knowledge, and that even junior staff can become experts if they stay with the collection - and at least staff who do stay tend to have a real interest in the subject.

The next topic addressed was that of using local history material for therapeutic purposes. The example of Liverpool was quoted, and it was noted that Birmingham's education liaison librarian has also done some work on an experimental basis. Such work can bring material into the library. On the whole, though, speakers considered that the best way for a collection to help is to provide copies of suitable material. Nottinghamshire make copies of photographs, audio tapes and films (transferred to video) available. Glasgow also makes reminiscence packs available through all branches, and Hampshire provides material both from its own stock and in co-operation with the Wessex Film and Sound Archive, which has professional equipment and is able to make reminiscence tapes. Librarians are not therapists and therefore their place is to help those who are - organisations with whom libraries co-operate include the Birmingham Institute for the Blind and the Hampshire Adult Basic Education Unit. It was also said that we must be careful not to let outreach take away from our core work and reader services: there is a need to strike a happy medium.

With time running out, the final question related to the way in which libraries can encourage the writing of local history in their communities. An important point made was that while libraries should encourage such writing, quality must be maintained. Referral to the Women's Institute was suggested, and another suggestion was to encourage societies to get into print, so that others might follow. However, this again brought in the question of quality. Intending authors doing research need to be given an indication of the quality of the sources they are using. Village history competitions were also suggested, the example of Wiltshire's sponsored competitions being quoted: these brought in quality entries and some of them were later published.

Studying family and community history: a new Open University course

Paul Smith and Ruth Finnegan

The Open University is at present planning a new local history course. DA301 - Studying Family and Community History - is a specially written course designed to assist students to set their own personal interests in a particular family or locality within a broader academic perspective and to develop their study through guided project work.

The topics covered in the course are currently of major popular interest - it is said, for instance that well over 100,000 people are now working on family history, and studies in local history also attract widespread attention. The OU course combines this personal interest and motivation with the rigour appropriate to the Honours level of university study. It will provide access both to an academic framework and to the training of critical skills as students engage in the assessment and analysis of primary sources, the development of personal research themes, and the presentation of findings in a systematic form.

The course material will locate small-scale studies in a wider academic context, and allow students to become familiar with the recurrent social patterns and scholarly debates which give perspective to their own projects. It will also provide the necessary background and guidance to enable students to deal directly with the relevant documentary, oral and visual sources. The main focus will be on 19th and 20th century sources and on the countries of the British Isles, but these limits will be interpreted flexibly.

As well as being closely related to students' own specific studies, the course constitutes a new approach to the study of family and community history. The interdisciplinary framework reflects new developments made possible by the synthesis of work from history, sociology, geography, demography and anthropology. Advice on the exploitation of oral and visual sources in addition to written ones is a feature of the course. Another is its attention to research related to immigrant populations and the 'new British', as well as to Anglo-Saxon or long settled populations. The course also fits in with current educational interest in project work and student-centred learning, making it attractive, for instance to teachers responsible for the development of project work for their own students.

It is expected that there will be a good deal of interest in the course when it starts in 1994.

As mentioned above, there is considerable emphasis on independent project work, and this will inevitably mean increased use of local studies libraries and record offices. We are very aware that in these days of ever fewer resources any project has to be planned carefully lest it places unfair demands in any one area and we are therefore anxious to bring our ideas to the attention of librarians now,

and to stress that their opinions will be canvassed. We are also eager to give practical advice to our students to enable them to plan and execute their work carefully and without burdening libraries unnecessarily.

Students of several Open University courses over the years have received help from local studies librarians and the institutions they serve and we are keen to maintain the atmosphere of friendly co-operation within which such interactions have almost always occurred. We shrink from creating anything which will strain resources whether they be of staff time or chairs to sit on!

We would welcome any comments which members of the Group might like to make. Any such comments or enquiries may be made to Paul Smith or Ruth Finnegan, the Open University Library, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA,

We look forward to hearing from you.

Paul Smith is Social Sciences Liaison Librarian, and Ruth Finnegan is the Chair of the Course Team for DA301.

Awards for Local Studies Publications

The winners of the Alan Ball Local History Awards for 1992 have recently been announced. This is the eighth year of the awards, and the judges commented that the standard continues to rise each year. The panel this year was most impressed with the number of entries, the overall quality and the wide range of subjects covered. Following a recent change in the rules, in which the distinction between 'author' and 'publisher' awards was abandoned, three awards were made this year.

The Award winners for 1992 are:

The London Borough of Sutton, for I spy the London Borough of Sutton; Newcastle upon Tyne City Libraries and Arts, for Cinemas of Newcastle, by Frank Manders;

Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council, for *Tameside 1066 - 1700*, by Michael Nevell.

The following four publications also greatly impressed the Panel, who cited them as 'nearly winners':

Motherwell District Council, for Steelopolis: the making of Motherwell 1750 - 1939, by Robert Duncan;

Northumberland County Council. for $Secret\,Berwick$: a photographer's impression, by Jim Walker;

Kirklees Metropolitan Council, for the book Words on war: memories of the home front during the second world war from people of the Kirklees area, by Helga Hughes:

Kirklees Metropolitan Council, for Transport: a National Curriculum source pack.

Frank Manders's Cinemas of Newcastle also won the 'Publications for sale' category in the Library Association/T C Farries Public Relations and Publicity Awards 1991, the results of which were also recently announced. The judges commented that this was an outstanding entry in a category of high standard entries, polished, well-researched and extremely well produced. The runner up was Helga Hughes' Words on war, from Kirklees, which was a 'nearly winner' in the Alan Ball Awards. The comments here were that it showed the serious subject of war in a humorous and very readable light, being packed full of anecdotes, cartoons and postcards showing the impact of war on the local community. This is the third year running that local studies entries have won one of the prestigious LA/Farries awards.

Library Association Local Studies Group - Annual Report 1991

The main event of 1991 for the Group was its participation in the Library Association's 'Umbrella' weekend at Leeds when, under the title of *Local studies provision and the community*, a varied and interesting group of speakers from the United Kingdom and overseas pointed out some major problems in providing local studies material while describing the communities with which they were involved.

The Dorothy McCulla Award for 1991 was awarded to Joe Fisher, the recently retired Local Studies Librarian of Glasgow City Libraries, for his contribution to local studies librarianship in Scotland over many years: the presentation was made at the Leeds weekend.

Local studies again featured in the Library Association/T C Farries Public Relations and Publicity Awards when Durham County Arts, Libraries and Museums Department won the Specific Event category for *Sweet Dreams*, am exhibition focusing on Horner's Dainty Dinah sweets factory, formerly the main employer in the town of Chester le Street.

The five branches of LSG throughout the United Kingdom have remained active and each has organised seminars, courses or conferences. The Scottish Branch, for instance, published the proceedings of a meeting on Scottish culture - the local dimension, and several members were also involved in the compilation of Essays in honour of Joe Fisher. published by Glasgow City Libraries. The Welsh Branch organised a most successful day school on sources available for tracing the history of a house which attracted librarians not only from Wales but also from various parts of England, as well as many interested members of the public.

The Group's *Guidelines for Local Studies Provision in Public Libraries*, published in 1990, continued to generate interest and talks were given in various parts of the country, mainly by Diana Winterbotham.

The Group continued to produce *The Local Studies Librarian*, which completed its tenth year of publication, while *LOCSCOT*, the journal of the Scottish Branches, also continued its successful career. These two publications remain the only British journals covering this area of the profession in any detail.

A leaflet publicising the activities of LSG was produced during the year and was widely distributed.

Overall, the Group had a busy and successful year in 1991, and looks forward to another in 1992.

Patrick Baird

The Dorothy McCulla Memorial Prize

This, the LSG's own award, has this year been made to Chris Makepeace for his services to local studies librarianship both as a practitioner and as an author. Now a local history consultant, for many years he was active in the profession in the North West, and was also chairman of LSG for several years, as well as helping to organise study weekends and seminars. As an author, he has contributed the *Local Studies* chapter in all three editions of *Printed Reference Material*, and is also the author of the standard British work on ephemera.

We should like to take this opportunity to remind readers that nominations for the McCulla Prize may be made at any time. The closing date for each year is January 31st, and nominations are considered at the first Committee meeting of the year, usually in March.

Wanted

The Local Studies Group is in urgent need of an Honorary Treasurer. The work is interesting and gives the person concerned plenty of contact with the profession, including LA Headquarters. You do not need to be a chartered accountant, as the present Treasurer will testify, though it does need a tidy mind and a certain amount of time. Initial help will be available from the present Hon. Treasurer, Elizabeth Melrose, York Central Library, Museum Square, York. If you are interested, please get in touch with her for more details (Tel: 0904-655631). It is hoped that the new Hon. Treasurer can start in the near future.

Notes and News

The Library Association's Information Services Group, South West Section, is to mount a day school on genealogical sources for library staff. Entitled 'Happy Families?' it is to be held at Bath Central Library on 10th September. A group of specialist speakers will present contributions on the role of the records offices, the facilities and resources of the Mormon Family History Centres, the Federation of Family History Societies and its groups, and 'Everything else you needed to know about genealogical enquiries but were afraid to ask!' The cost is £20.00 (£18.00 ISG members).

Further details from and bookings to Howard Sykes, Bristol Reference Library, College Green, Bristol BS1 5TL.

In March this year, as part of the 1992 Adult Learners Week, Pergamon Open Learning, in association with the Library Association offered the Independent Library Learner Award. This was intended for someone in the UK who demonstrated a learning achievement in independent study gained by significant exploitation of the resources found in a library. Although he did not win, one of the runners up, builder Roy Southgate, is cited as having become an expert on the history of Great Yarmouth by analysing and indexing local newspapers. He keeps notebooks of local topics and is in great demand from other local history students and the library staff in Great Yarmouth library for his unique knowledge. He feels that he has greatly benefited from learning in the library.

The LA is keen to encourage the enrolment of more affiliated members and has recently produced a leaflet detailing the services offered to Affiliates. It explains briefly the advantages of membership for non-professional staff. If you would like to draw this to the attention of your staff, copies of the leaflet, and a poster, are available from the Membership Department.

The Disability Interest Librarians Group has produced *The Accessible Librarian* information pack, with the aim of creating interest among library staff. It was designed to complement a study day held in November 1991 at the LA, and includes such topics as legislation, audio-visual materials, exhibitions and access to materials. It is not, of course, directed at local studies librarians, but it might be worth while asking whether your library has a copy. It is priced at £5.00. Orders and further information from Philippa Lane, Disabled Living Foundation, 380 - 384 Harrow Road, London W9 2HU.

The Library Section of NATFHE will be holding its 21st annual conference at Grasmere in November, and is trying to contact as many ex-committee members and early conference delegates as possible, regardless of the type of library work in which they are now employed. It is also trying to collect programmes and other items from past conferences. If you are one of these people and/or have any items you are prepared to give or lend to the Section, please contact Margaret Chapman, Huddersfield Technical College, New North Road, Huddersfield HD1 5NN.

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NOTE: At December 31st approximately £1550 was due for payment in respect of 1991 activities including postages and the printing of the Local Studies Librarian. Approximately £800 was due to the Group at the same date.

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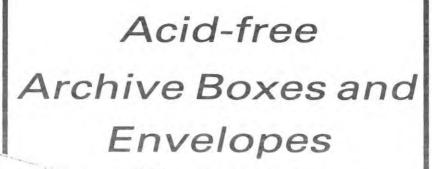


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