



focus

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Editorial



Thank you for taking the time to download this issue of CILIP ILIG Focus. This edition is something of a World Library and Information Congress (WLIC) 2017 special! The annual event - organised by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) - was hosted in Wrocław in August of this year. There are articles from three attendees, all with very different experiences of the conference. Charlotte Brown from Bristol Public Libraries received our inaugural Alan Hopkinson Award, enabling her to attend a WLIC for the first time. Matt Meinhardt recounts his journey to WLIC and his experiences there from the perspective of someone who is Deaf. Lastly, CILIP ILIG's very own Anna Jablkowska writes about her experience volunteering at WLIC. Above all, the summaries help to highlight the disparate perspectives of those who went to the conference, with some 3,100 delegates from 122 countries attending in total.

The sad truth is that recent global events have brought into stark contrast the fact that we cannot always rely upon national governments to act in our best interests in the face of troubling threats such as the undermining of democratic freedoms, climate change, or even erosion of basic human rights. Instead it falls upon all of us, where some of our most fundamental shared values are under threat, to act to help protect them. Events like WLIC help by providing a forum where like-minded library and information professionals can

gather to examine how we can work to oppose some of these threats; the work being done to support the [United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)¹ offers a prime example. Other examples are highlighted in this issue, from grassroots projects like the Hope Community Village Library Project which Katherine Coussement helped to establish in a Kerala orphanage in India, to the work of the Erasmus Programme as written about by Nigel Buckley. Maynard Chipangura recounts his visit to the CILIP Conference in Manchester this July, mentioning the possibility of partnerships between libraries in Zimbabwe and Book Aid International's [Children's Corners](#)² scheme.

As individuals and as a profession, we have opportunities to make our own contribution to international projects which encourage collaboration, the sharing of ideas and promotion of fundamental freedoms in order to mitigate the effects of the trials and tribulations being faced globally. We will continue to highlight projects which do this in this journal, so if you have examples of your own then please do send them in to us!

Phil Segall, Editor

¹ IFLA (2017) UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development [Online] Available at: <https://www.ifla.org/node/10091> [Accessed 14 Nov 2017].

² Book Aid International (2017) Children's Corners: Creating safe, child-friendly spaces in African public libraries [Online] Available at: <https://www.bookaid.org/aboutus/our-work/programmes/open-doors-childrens-corners/> [Accessed 14 Nov 2017].

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Front cover image courtesy of NASA

Hope Community Village Library Project

By Katherine Coussement*

Introduction

In February 2017, after almost two years of planning, I was lucky enough to travel to south-west India to set up a library.

This had been a dream of mine since I started working in public libraries in 2004. Then a chance conversation with a friend in March 2015 led to the discovery that a local charity was looking for a librarian to help establish

The Village

Hope Community Village was established in 1995 by a Halifax businessman, John Veitch, who wanted to do something for the orphans and street children he encountered on his travels in India. He bought some land in rural Kerala and set about starting a children's home with a difference. This is not an orphanage as they are usually imagined - at Hope the children are looked after by "mothers" who live



Into the village

a community library within a Kerala orphanage. It seemed a tailor-made opportunity for me – one that was to prove both more challenging, and more rewarding, than I could have imagined.

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with them in seven houses built to the traditional Keralan design, each mother responsible for 10 children. They are cared for and go to school, grow up and are part of a community as they would be in any other family. Hope Village is a well-kept oasis where the children are clearly happy and thriving, and some of the earliest residents have gone on to become engineers, nurses and social workers.

Hope has a kindergarten, an IT suite and music room, not to mention its own cows...but what it lacked, until recently, was a library. In the early days of the project a donation of £1000 was made with the aim of establishing a library, and more recently a Yorkshire junior school donated books which they were weeding out. Nonetheless there was no library as such – the books were simply kept on open shelves on a landing, and had suffered quite badly from the humidity, as well as being damaged in use. The time had come for a renewed effort to establish a functioning library.

Challenges and rewards

The challenges began long before I got to India. Fundraising, deciding how best to use the (short) time we would be there, planning the library and communicating my plans to the staff and trustees - all this was more involved than I would have expected. There were moments when I genuinely thought the project wouldn't get off the ground. I discovered that my vision for the library didn't match that of the trustees and the village Director; it was hard to find good quality children's books; I struggled to convey library concepts and translate terminology which I had always taken for granted in the United Kingdom (UK); there were awkward questions about the budget. The rewards, though, were immense: seeing the new library assistant gain confidence and start to offer suggestions, going on our first book-buying trip, watching some of the children wander into the room

and pick up books while we worked, these were among many memorable moments. The culmination of all this was the day we opened the library officially, with a proper ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Getting there

I planned to travel with the friend who had set everything in motion originally - for moral support as well as extra hands to do all the actual work involved in making the library. Costs were higher than we'd expected; flights in August were prohibitively expensive, although it is the tail-end of the monsoon season and most Western travellers prefer to go in the first two (driest) months of the year. January and February are particularly busy in the academic library where I work but the Head of Library Services was willing to let me take three weeks leave for the project.

As well as dedicated family members and friends, who generously supported my fundraising efforts, colleagues were keen to help; we held two successful events, around World Book Day 2016, which raised £530. It was agreed that this would cover the first year's salary for a library assistant (2500 rupees a month, or about £30). The rest went into the budget for shelving and stock.

The library plan and the reality

Communication with the trustees and staff of the Village was more complicated than I expected – the trustees are all volunteers and the Director of Hope, as I soon realised,

is a busy man, with various projects to manage (a solar water heating system, for example.) The library project, which loomed large for me, was only a minor strand amongst many; so I was left to develop my own plan of action.

I knew that I would need to decide on a basic and easily managed library system. My friend had recently volunteered in Ethiopia, where she had seen expensive equipment standing unused because of a missing part and no funds or expertise to replace it. We agreed that the best strategy was to establish a very simple system which could be enlarged upon in future, if required.

Internet searches brought up two texts which both dated from the era before computers were commonplace in public libraries. “*Setting Up and Running a School Library*”¹ and “*Libraries for All! How to Start and Run a Basic Library*”² were both useful reading as I pondered how best to organise the library stock.

I found it surprisingly hard to decide on a method of issuing books. The two publications each suggested various methods of recording stock circulation; for very small libraries a simple notebook or ledger was recommended. My preference was for a version of the Browne Issue System, which involved filing a card for the book along with the borrower’s card, in a tray organised by date. Although I knew how much time this would take to create, it seemed more efficient for

the user than a simple notebook.

I was conscious of the danger of going to India as a well-meaning Westerner, making assumptions about what people wanted or needed without knowing what was most suitable. When researching my project I found some information pertaining to academic and regional libraries but it was harder to learn how Indian community libraries work. However, I was motivated to persist when I learned that the Indian government had recently started an initiative to promote rural libraries.³ Coming from a climate of drastic cuts to library services in the UK, I found this a very welcome encouragement.

On arrival at the Village we were shown around by a trustee who pointed out the books donated by the English primary school. He advised me to throw most of the books out and start afresh, and went on to ask how much money I’d brought to buy new library stock.

That was one of the more awkward moments, as I had assumed that the money we had raised would go quite some way towards acquiring new books. A swift visit to the accountant for Hope reassured me that our donation had indeed gone into the budget for books.

Getting to work

The following day we met the new library assistant, Rajani Shaji. She had no library experience, but rose to



Katherine Coussement with Rajani Shaji

the challenge, gaining IT skills, library knowledge, and confidence, as we began organising the books in both English and Malayalam (the main language in Kerala). The first task was to go through all the donated school books, repair or weed them, add date labels, and classify them. Following a very simplified Dewey system suggested by Baird¹, we used coloured stickers to label each subject, such as blue for biography, and so on; I felt this would be suitable for children, but also for library users unfamiliar with more complex classification systems. Meanwhile Rajani transliterated the Malayalam titles for our catalogue. I had not anticipated, though, that these

tasks would take us well into the second week of our stay.

Another tricky moment came when discussing plans for a book-buying trip with the Hope staff. I discovered that the terms “fiction” and “non-fiction” didn’t seem to be meaningful, so resorted to talking about “information” books as opposed to novels and stories. Unfortunately this elicited the response “Oh no, people have phones nowadays, they’ll use Google for information...” When we visited a community library a few miles away, however, Rajani took note of the shelves labelled “history”, “philosophy” and so on; the Librarian



Library in progress

there made it clear that library users did value reference books and visited the library for study as well as leisure. And on our first visit to a bookshop (attached to the publisher of a local newspaper, the Mathrubhumi) Rajani began to gather together dozens of biographies, travelogues, self-help titles and books of essays. We soon had plenty of varied new stock - fiction and otherwise - for our shelves.

As modern and delightful as that bookshop was, with knowledgeable staff and well-produced books, the selection of children's stock was limited. The Hope children love to play football; we planned to buy some nice soccer books but couldn't find any. Science books were also in short supply. Many of the children's books we found elsewhere were poor quality,

with cheap paper and second-rate illustrations. A visit to Amazon India did result in a handful of beautiful bilingual Malayalam-English books but mostly it was a forceful reminder of the calibre of the UK children's book industry.

There were some surprises on another shopping trip, to a branch of DC Books in Cochin. The bright, well-stocked shop had many translated copies of Agatha Christie and Sherlock Holmes, not unexpectedly; but I hadn't realised that Indian readers are so fond of Paulo Coelho - and who would have guessed that *Fifty Shades of Gray* had been translated into Malayalam?

Time pressures

By the beginning of the third week I was starting to feel panicky, as it didn't



Hope girls helping

seem possible that we could achieve our goal. I gave up on the idea of an issue system using cards as there simply

wasn't time to produce one; following the example of the library we'd visited, we opted for a simple ledger. Three of



Library sign



Opening ceremony

the younger Hope girls were drafted in to help with sticking date labels into books (I had to spend that afternoon supervising them, though it did mean that they were very interested in the library once it opened) and we all worked like mad but I couldn't believe that we'd be ready for the planned gala opening the day before we were due to fly home.

Everyone pulled together at the last minute though - mopping, dusting, finding clean tablecloths and extra chairs for guests. We raced through the new stock; cataloguing, classifying and

labelling it. We ran out of glue. We ran out of index cards for cataloguing, and, unable to find them in nearby shops, resorted to getting a batch printed – in India sometimes it is as easy to ask someone to make something for you, as it is to find it ready-made.

At around three o'clock on the final afternoon, someone placed in my hands a newly produced sign with "Hope Community Library" and the opening hours on it; an hour or so later the ribbon cutting was carried out by UK author Patrick Moon, who was staying in Kerala and had connections

with Hope Village; there were balloons, smiling faces, many photographs and great excitement, especially when the first book was borrowed. The oldest of the mothers, resident at Hope since its founding, chose one of the brand new Malayalam novels and signed the issue book; Rajani ceremonially stamped the return date. That was the moment I knew we'd done it – we'd made a library.

Since Hope Community Library opened on February 23rd 2017, more

than sixty-five people from the local area have joined; the library is open six evenings a week.

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IFLA World Library and Information Congress 2017

A report by inaugural Alan Hopkinson Award Winner and first time WLIC attendee Charlotte Brown*

My first mistake took place before take-off. I decided to spend the night at Stansted Airport, where I got exactly no sleep, after which the flight was delayed on the runway. No one likes

to have unidentified problems on the runway. By the time I reached Wrocław airport, I was already confused. Just what exactly was the time? I had four new-fangled electronic devices, all of which said totally opposing times. Clocks didn't seem to exist anymore. I made a mental note to buy a watch when I could, and maybe dispose of some of these "smart" devices. My tiredness and confusion overwhelmed me and I managed to set the time two hours back as opposed to one ahead, and missed the probably very useful sessions for 'newcomers' on the first day and the UK Caucus. After this not so auspicious start, I started to wonder if I had made the right decision to come to the IFLA conference at all...

**Charlotte works in Bristol Public Libraries as a Library Assistant. She is also studying for an MSc in Library and Information management at the University of Ulster. She was honoured to receive the Alan Hopkinson Award to attend this year's IFLA conference¹ in Wrocław, Poland. She believes that libraries are an intrinsic part of our communities and that, by working together, library professionals can be agents for social change..*



Libraries, Solidarity and Society

Luckily, things started to look up on Sunday morning. My first general impression of the conference was that it was very well organised. It was taking place in the beautiful Centennial Hall which is one of the top destinations for tourists visiting the city. We were all given matching rucksacks and red conference badges, which helped me feel part of it all; I looked very cool and we got free transport all over the city! There was also an IFLA WLIC app which allowed you to plan your conference and gave you updates throughout the event. I met with the team who had given me

the Alan Hopkinson Award to come to the conference – Ian Stringer and Anna Jabalkowska - who made me feel very welcome and we headed to the spectacular 'Opening Session' together.

It was my first IFLA WLIC conference, and I had no idea what to expect. The Opening Session started with loud Eurovison-esque pop music, strobe lights and the sound of beating drums. This was followed by



Library or supermarket?!

speeches from various ministers. One of the speakers said that the theme of this year's IFLA WLIC – Libraries, Solidarity and Society - “expressed the hopes and dreams of the library community perfectly”, a sentiment that resonated with me and my reasons for coming to the conference. I learnt that being compared to a library is a compliment in Poland! The President of the Republic of Poland stated (in a letter read out at the ceremony) how important libraries were for the country and how much he supported libraries. The cynic in me wondered how much this support was a theoretical or practical one – the library nearest to me seemed to have been turned into a grocery store (see photo!)

All of this was fairly ordinary, so I certainly hadn't imagined a sudden acrobatic dance interpretation of the history of Wrocław, told in four acts, with acrobats juggling fire, dancers leaping around, complete with bright flashing lights and coloured smoke. It's just not what you think of when you attend a library conference! I emerged out of the large auditorium, where over 3,000 people from all over the world had been sitting nodding our heads to the loud Euro-pop music, feeling inspired, slightly strange and still with little idea of how to pronounce the name of the city.

The conference programme was packed so full of interesting talks that I began to feel slightly panicked - I didn't want to miss any of it! Due to

my interest in history, social issues and in refugee/migrant issues, I decided to go to sessions based loosely around these themes.

Sunday Sessions

Libraries in Times of Crisis – Historical Perspectives (Library History Special Interest Group)

Like the title suggests, this first session was comprised of five different talks about ways in which libraries have protected their collections in times of conflict or crisis. The talk by Hibaq Nur from the Qatar National library, who spoke about libraries in Somalia during the civil war in the 1990s stood out most for me. Bristol, where I live and work, has a large Somali community and so I am always interested to hear more about the history of this country. Her conclusion was that several factors hindered the protection of materials during the civil war – inter-clan fighting or 'clan-ism', the lack of value placed on literature and libraries, and the concentration of resources in the capital city. A term that she introduced was 'Bibliocaust', a word coined by [Fernando Baez](#)² which seems to sum up well what can happen to books during times of crisis, sometimes deliberately. Other interesting parts of other talks focussed on the logistics of moving materials during a war and how to prevent loss on the way or during the storage process. It is always very important to remind ourselves of the battles people go through to preserve knowledge and culture against the odds. The economic crisis in the UK

threatens our collections today, but this is hardly comparable.

On Sunday evening, there was a welcome 'party'. After a quick jog around the rivers that snake through the pretty city (half marathon training doesn't stop for conferences) I turned up to the party slightly sweaty and ready for some free food and drink. Unfortunately, I couldn't work out if any of the food was vegetarian and hadn't quite mastered 'excuse me' in Polish yet (by the end of the week I did manage to get 'thank you' down to an almost passable level) so I opted for a liquid dinner of champagne and went to see the exhibits. There were 190 different poster exhibits with representatives there to talk to you about their projects. These were library initiatives from all over the world. My favourite was from a Finnish public library, where a pony was brought regularly to the library so children could read to it! I considered suggesting the idea to my superiors in Bristol...but I thought better of it. It was also at this party that I made a new friend from Argentina and I was pleased that I had begun the process of 'networking', something that admittedly terrifies me.

Monday

I woke up promptly when my alarm went off, determined to arrive at the conference for the first sessions of the day after finally getting the time right. After a breakfast of an ice-cold gherkin, I ran for the bus and managed to get to the conference early for once.

Interreligious Dialogues as Library Initiatives Demonstrating Societal Solidarity – Religions: Libraries and Dialogues

I chose this session because I was interested to see what libraries are doing and what can be done further to heal some of the divisions in our societies, especially with the rise of Islamophobia in recent years.

The speakers discussed numerous ways in which their respective libraries were trying to bridge these divides, some of which were specific religious institutions such as The Museum of the Bible. One of the other speakers emphasised that the mission of libraries in general is to "make the world a better place" and to do this we must take a holistic approach to marketing of libraries and their functions as part of a diverse and inclusive society. All speakers recognised a need for dialogue and a space for this dialogue to take place, in order to find commonalities and reduce fear. Another important point discussed was the legacy of colonial times and the recent large-scale wave of immigration which is effecting current political discourses. I left feeling positive that library professionals all over were recognising the roles we can play in the community in terms of religious integration.

I found Wrocław's stunning old town in a rare and quick lunch break. Although I didn't manage to go any of the pre-arranged library tours, of which there were several, I did pop in



Charlotte at "Książka w podróży" (meaning, literally, "Book a trip")

to see the library in the centre – the Lower Silesian Public Library, I peered into the windows of the impressive train station library too:

*These times to us are worth savin'
– Documenting the Art of Social
Transformation since 1960*

“...the personal is political and the future is female”

I came away from this set of talks feeling very inspired to start my own archive for political pamphlets and protest material! I found these presentations fascinating. My favourite talk was “Protest Publishing from the copy machine to the internet: Culture Wars Zine Collection” by Deborah Ultan from the University of Minnesota. She emphasised the value of preserving materials yourself, the cultural and social importance of collecting these counter cultural DIY materials to “give a snapshot of the times”. This made me reflect on the need to preserve materials as they come, and think about how difficult it will be today to keep an archive that isn't digital, due to the nature of social media use today in protest and social movements. There were other presentations about other types of protest art and collections, ranging from Sweden to Hungary and the United States. I found it very interesting that librarians and archivists would themselves deliberately go to protests and art events to collect materials specifically for the archives.

Tuesday

*Multicultural Library Manifesto Toolkit
– Case Studies and Illustrations from a
Global Perspective – Library Services for
Multicultural Populations*

This was my first 'interactive session'. Circular tables were arranged so that after nine short (five-minute) speeches, guests could spend time with the speakers having a more in depth chat to three of the speakers of their choice. It was a bit like library speed dating. The speakers came from all over the world, from India to Chile, the United States to Switzerland and many more (the person from Bangladesh was unable to make his presentation due to his visa being denied, which I thought a little ironic). I chose to learn more about the Chilean prison libraries, the resettlement of African refugees in Missouri, and the Swiss multicultural initiatives in public libraries. I found that this setup gave more of a chance to have questions answered and begin a discussion, however the time frames were very short and I would have liked to spend more time with each speaker. The general conclusion I got from these talks was that in order to encourage better integration there need to be more connections between local governments and the libraries, more signposting and more outreach to community leaders and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). This is a theme that I feel has been constant throughout the conference.

I was pleased to catch the end of talk on Senegalese school libraries while eating my lunch in one the comfortable chill out areas. The mention of the [KoomBook³](#) caught my attention, developed by Libraries Without Borders who I have been following for the past few years (in fact, I am running the previously mentioned half marathon to raise money for that same organisation).

The evening session I attended was about information inequality and the digital divide, put on by IFLA's Freedom of Access to Information and Freedom of Expression ([FAIFE⁴](#)) Committee. I wanted to go to this as

I work in a public library and one of our main roles is to facilitate use of computers. I see daily the effects of the digital divide and information poverty. However, the talk focussed more on censorship of the internet and about the English language dominance which causes certain groups to have less of a voice. This was certainly very true, and I couldn't help but think about the conference and the dominance of English there too.

After a day crammed full of very intellectual talks my head was spinning. The 'cultural evening' was still to come. While we were waiting for it to start, I got the chance to chat to Nick



Meeting with Nick Poole, Ian Stringer and Sylwia Grabowska



Water Show

Poole, CILIP's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and one of the other people responsible for giving me the award. I must admit I felt a little star struck but he was very down to earth and he didn't seem to mind me talking at length about closures to Bristol libraries.

We heard the music starting in the garden/fountain area, where a stage had been erected (unbeknown to me!) and food laid out, including a bar. In my welcome pack, I was pleased to find vouchers for food and drink and I headed with my new friends to enjoy the evening.

The performances consisted of

traditional Polish dancing and music, including a dance we were encouraged to take part in which reminded me of the Scottish Ceilidh dance. There was a water show at the fountains with multi-coloured lights which really was lovely, then the evening concluded at 2am with a Silent Disco! I wish I could have stayed for this as librarians at a rave seems very amusing - but I was far too cold, having ignored the IFLA warning to 'dress appropriately'!

Wednesday

More than Green: Sustainability of Practice - Public Libraries & the 2030 United Nations Agenda - Public Libraries, Environment, Sustainability and Libraries SIG

“We humans need to change our behaviour to our environment”...

...a statement that I wholeheartedly agree with. The United Nations 2030 Sustainability Goals were top of the agenda at the conference but I only made it to one of these discussions, centred on public libraries. The talk itself was comprised of four different presentations, the best of which was on the initiatives done by public libraries in Sweden where they had a 'green corner' - encouraging locals to inform themselves about environmental issues. They provided eco-friendly tea and coffee and even had a scheme to provide green bikes to those who needed to get to a job interview. They even celebrated World Toilet Day, and provided veggie and vegan food in the library! Perhaps next year's IFLA might consider more vegan alternatives too?

I finished my conference with some Polish beers in the sun with some new friends. All in all, it was a fantastic experience – I learnt so much and

came away feeling very hopeful about the direction the international library community was going in. Next year – Malaysia!

Editor's note: Look out for the 2018 Alan Hopkinson Award and your opportunity to attend the WLIC in Malaysia! An advertisement will be posted on the CILIP website early next year.

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My Experience as a Volunteer at IFLA's World Library and Information Congress 2017

By Anna Jablkowska*

As soon as I heard back in March 2017 that volunteers were sought for the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) Congress in Wrocław, I knew here was an opportunity not to be missed. I applied immediately and was delighted when I was accepted. Over the coming months I was sent information, so I knew my tasks would be Room Control and Badge Control. I then received an email stating that volunteers were also required for the day after the conference finished to assist on one of the organised sightseeing tours. Once again I was happy to assist. I was therefore asked to go as a translator on a tour to the Silesian towns Lubin, Polkowice and Bolesławiec. I had already visited Bolesławiec in the past but that was primarily for the pottery which is produced there.

Accommodation during the conference period was being offered in student hostels. I found, however, that with the help of my relatives I could have a two roomed flat for my own use, so I decided to take that offer up instead! I was lucky in that the flat was situated reasonably close both to the centre of Wrocław and also within about 30 minutes walk to the Centennial Hall, where the conference was taking place.

The conference was listed as taking place from 19 to 25 August. As a volunteer, I was asked to arrive on Thursday 17th August. I flew into Poland the day before, so on Thursday morning before arriving to the hall for training, I took the opportunity to walk around and see something of the town. In the afternoon I attended the training session. I gather there were around 300 volunteers - certainly a large percentage were Poles but not all. I knew three volunteers before the conference started, two of whom I bumped into once or twice throughout the event.

I was also given to understand this was the first time volunteers from overseas were used. We were all given a bag with conference details and a red waistcoat to wear. We were assigned to our teams, and then were shown around the site which consisted of three buildings. Our supervisor then informed us of our duties. For Room Control we had to ensure computers and microphones were working, speakers' presentations downloaded, and glasses and water available for speakers. For Badge Control we had to check that only people entitled to enter the talks could do so; as everyone wore a badge, this was reasonably straightforward. I found I had six duties throughout the whole conference, so was not overworked and had plenty of free time and I could attend some sessions.

**Anna Jablkowska is CILIP ILIG Secretary*



Anna (right) with a group of fellow IFLA WLIC volunteers

those of us who volunteered to help with tours. When I turned up, I was surprised to hear that I was the only volunteer who lived overseas.

My first official duty was on the Monday, so Saturday I spent sightseeing. On Sunday, I decided to attend the Opening Ceremony. The speeches prior to the main ceremony (which I thought possibly went on a bit too long...) were followed by a short history of Poland which culminated in a history of the city of Wrocław in dance. Both of these I found fascinating and the dance was particularly entertaining. It was interesting to discover that several other people agreed with my opinions about the ceremony, including some people who

On Friday 18 August, I would have had nothing to do, except that this time I was called in for a briefing for



Opening Ceremony

had attended other IFLA conferences. Many of these attendees also thought this to be one of the better opening ceremonies they had seen.

In the evening of that day I attended the opening of the exhibition party, where food and drink was readily available. As a volunteer I wandered around to see the various exhibition stands and noticed some delegates asking individual stands to sign/stamp to say they had visited. Although I could readily understand why the Polish Library Association had a stand, I was rather surprised to see an American Library Association stand. I was informed it was because they have members outside of the States; clearly this was another effective means of promotion.

The following morning I started work. The work was not too difficult, as already mentioned. It was important I arrived half an hour before any session I was working on. If working on Room Control, I was expected to stay throughout the session and if there were any questions I would go around the room with a microphone to the questioners. When doing Badge Control, I found myself outside the room, frequently with no means of hearing the session, sadly. Sometimes, the sessions only had around 12 delegates, in which case no overhead projector was used and (because the delegates tended to talk around a table) as a Room Assistant you found yourself with even less to do and unfortunately you couldn't easily hear

what the entire session was about either.

Outside my working schedule I found I was kept busy, particularly as I wanted to prepare myself for the visit I had been asked to assist with on the Friday. I went to the city centre library to introduce myself to the person who was officially leading the tour. This proved to be a very useful meeting; I found I even knew things about the tour which she was not aware of herself! Another morning I arranged to see the person in charge of organising all the tours with some work I had prepared about my tour in advance and this also proved to be beneficial. All in all, other than one session which I attended out of interest, the sessions I attended were those I needed to. I was also happy to offer to help with extra sessions should that be required and at one point was able to do so.

I attended the closing session on Thursday. This mainly consisted of information regarding next year's IFLA Congress and was a good opportunity to introduce the new IFLA President. At one point I unexpectedly heard a familiar name and to my surprise saw that CILIP's own Martyn Wade had won an award! An IFLA Medal, no less - for distinguished service to IFLA and international librarianship.

On Friday I conducted my tours as a translator and visited two public libraries in Lubin and in Polkowice. In Boleslawiec we visited one of the factories where pottery was made

which I found very enjoyable. At both the libraries we were made very welcome and were given very generous presents from both libraries to take home. The one thing which was noticeable is that the cuts we have in the UK had not reached there. Cataloguing is done on site, as is book labelling etc. There were some eye catching exhibitions too. For example, as you entered the library in Polkowice, there was an ornate picture frame hanging up; half the group wanted a photo of themselves within the picture frame. As well as running reading groups, staff run events for children in the local park, and for adults they had culinary evenings. I also liked the idea

that they had contests for children in design, and the best pictures were reproduced as postcards, or - as in Polkowice - a carrier bag.

As the first IFLA conference I attended, it was an enjoyable and worthwhile experience. I may not have attended all the sessions I could have attended but those I did (either out of interest or as a volunteer) were worthwhile. For me it was also good to hear, having asked other people who had attended other IFLA conferences, that this was one of the ones they had enjoyed the most.



Anna with the group of IFLA WLIC delegates on the Silesian Tour.

Communicating and Travelling in Eastern Europe

By Matt Meinhardt*

Every source I have encountered, from people I have communicated with who have been to Europe, to articles and books on travelling to Europe, has said that Europeans - especially young ones - speak really good English. I do get confused looks as to why I am not using my voice, I point to my ears and shake my head to indicate that I am Deaf – then everyone commits paper and pen. Travelling in Europe I quickly found that many people in the countries I visited were very capable of reading and writing English. This helped to make my trip so very memorable. Interestingly enough there were times when my dad asked me to take the lead in a conversation because he had a hard time aurally understanding

people there, while it was much easier when I read/wrote back and forth. A really nice surprise was that older generations understood written English just as well as the young ones.

When I landed in Frankfurt for my seven hour layover I wanted to take a quick trip to Hauptwache, Römer, and Römerberg. After figuring out where I needed to go by observation and talking with people via paper and pen, I ended up going the wrong way – one reason for this is that I have not ridden on a tram for a long time! I have forgotten how it works, but quickly relearned. I arrived at an industrialized-looking but beautiful Frankfurt Central Station. I decided to make the best of it and walk around amongst the community. I had to buy souvenirs because my ancestors are German plus I root for the German team during the World Cup. Now, I have a really nice Deutschland shirt ready for the World Cup and I recently wore it for an Oktoberfest here in Minnesota.

Jeremy Matthew (“Matt”) Meinhardt is from Faribault, Minnesota in the United States of America (USA). He is currently a student on the St Catherine University’s Master in Library and Information Science course and expects to graduate in 2019.

He previously held a librarian job at Minnesota State Academy for the Deaf and is currently seeking a public library job.



Sightseeing in the Prague Castle area included St. Vitus Church, Prague Gates, and the Changing of the Guard. The walk on Charles Bridge and floating on the Vltava River was an unique experience. The next day was a day trip to the famous Karoly Levy to visit the Mosher Glass Factory and drink its thermal waters.

On our third day in Prague, my dad wanted to rest and I went to explore more of the city. I visited the Municipal Library of Prague and explored its graphic novel/comics section which was impressive. I got to interact with Daniel Kopřiva who is a children's librarian. He was extremely helpful in answering my questions about the library and librarians. He later sent me an email about wordless books by Europeans. I have a strong interest in graphic novels and wordless books. Across the street from the library I explored The Klementinum which houses the National Library of the Czech Republic. The main attraction, called Baroque Library Hall, was undergoing restoration work, but the general reading room, hallways filled with painting and an old card catalogue system were open for visitors.

I am a fan of zines and in one of my travel books it mentioned that an art gallery called NoD displays covers of zines. To my surprise it was much more than that; along with the art gallery it had a concert/theatre stage, bar and restaurant. Too bad the zines were not on display, but above the bar was a ginormous golden femur and in a drinking room it had a floor to floor, corner to corner, 360° live audio and video art production. I drank two Becherovka – delicious! I topped off my day by walking to Old Town Square for a closer look at the magnificent Astronomical Clock. Across the street was the Stone Bell House that exhibited the fascinating works of Róna.

In Vienna there were long strips of food markets, restaurants and gift shops in Naschmarkt. At the end of the strips there were many independent vendors selling their antiques. The next day we got on my dad's favorite mode of transportation; the Hop-On Hop-Off Buses which we rode in Prague as well. I am more of a find-it-myself kind of guy. On the third day we hoofed it and visited the Leopold Museum, Hofburg, Saint Augustine's Church, Museum of Austrian Resistance and the National Library of Austria. There was one disappointment: I wanted to go to the Time Travel Vienna but their movies were not captioned. For that reason I did not purchase a ticket. Hopefully in time the movies will be captioned.

On the last day my dad decided to rest again and of course I went out by myself to explore more of Vienna. I went to Bücherei Wien, one of Vienna's libraries. The structure is amazing because on the one side it looks like a pyramid with stairs (or the option of an elevator) leading to the library and on the other side it had a great view of Vienna. This building sits above the tram/subway line and on the very top there is a coffee shop. Of course I checked out their graphic novels and found it just as impressive as Prague's. No wordless books. After that I visited the St. Stephen's Cathedral, the Jesuitenkirche and the Clock Museum. That night we took the train to travel the three hour ride to Budapest.

The next day dad was at it again with the Hop-On Hop-Off mode of transportation and I have to admit it is a nice way to get to see most of the attractions. What is disappointing, though is that the audio descriptions are not accessible to the Deaf. My

dad is not the best in American Sign Language (ASL) but I love him for his attempt in getting me involved in what he hears. After visiting the Citadella we walked to the stunning Gellert Baths and this made my dad's day as he loves soaking in hot waters.



Opening Ceremony at IFLA WLIC

I love it too. We got on a boat to float the Danube River, took the bus to see Hero's Square and Vajdahunyad Castle. My dad decided to go back to the hotel and I decided to see more of Budapest during the night. The city was spectacular! The next day we both visited the Great Synagogue, Castle Hill and we couldn't resist trying out the Széchenyi Medicinal Baths and Swimming Pool. My dad flew back to the States while I went on to Wrocław, Poland for the IFLA World Library and Information Congress Conference.

When I got to Wrocław I visited the four denominational churches in the Four Denominations District. The temples were close to each other so I was able to go in two of them; the Evangelical Church of God's Providence (Lutheran) and the White Stork Synagogue. The synagogue had a small but astounding museum with information that goes back 1,000 years. I went to the city's enormous and beautiful central square, the Rynek. There I visited Wrocław's Town Hall which houses an astronomical clock. I entered Church of Mary Magdalene and also got to visit St. Elizabeth Church.

The next day I went to Hydropolis, a museum about water. I spent most of the day there because it was fascinating. That night my class and interpreters arrived to the hotel. I went to 15 sessions or events in total. Right off the bat I started my week-long networking with the most wonderful people, like Ian Stringer

from Great Britain, Marie-Nöelle Andissac from France, Rebecca Miller from Germany, Nancy Bolt from the United States, and others. The sessions I attended included Access to Programs and Conferences for People with Disabilities, Intersectionality: Libraries and the Intersection of LGBTQ+ Lives, Check Me Out! Human Libraries and Unique Circulating Collections from Art to Technology, amongst many more. The events I attended were the Opening Ceremony, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Party and IFLA WLIC's traditionally fun Cultural Evening.

As a former history/social studies teacher for many years, I wanted to go visit a concentration camp. My interpreters and I originally planned on going to Auschwitz but Rebecca Miller suggested a place closer to Wrocław; a town called Rogoznica. At the outskirts of town there was the Gross Rosen Concentration Camp. The first artifact I saw here was a huge bronze relief of the victims right after their liberation. It was so emotional that I choked back tears. After completing our self-guided tour, I realised it had been the most numbing and humbling experience.

On the way to Rogoznica we had to disembark our first train to catch another train. Well, it so happened our second train would not come and we had to wait another two hours for a later one. We started to enjoy the conversations we were having and we noticed a young elementary school-



Matt with Ian Stringer (CILIP ILIG Chair)



Matt at the IFLA WLIC Bill and Melinda Gates Party

aged girl sitting next to us and staring at our conversation. We started to talk about how she was staring at us and for some Deaf people it is considered really rude, yet we knew that she most likely never met a Deaf person, let alone seen one who signs ASL. I decided to strike up a conversation with her and when I turned around I saw two other school-aged girls with her talking to each other. It was interesting to observe her trying to talk in English to my interpreters and her looking at her peers for English

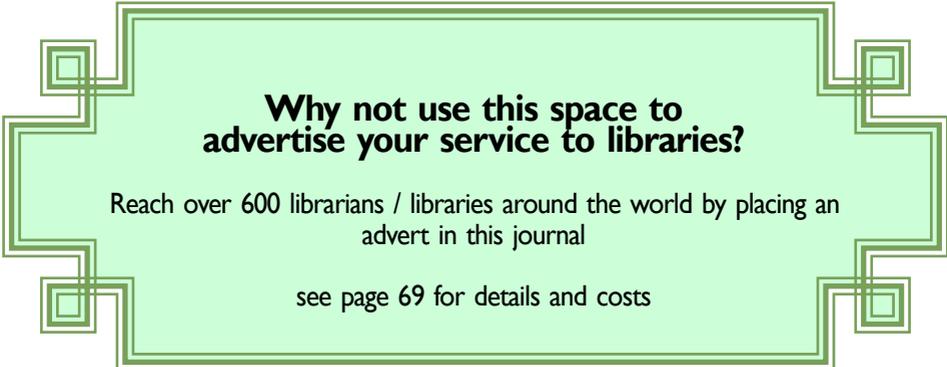
help. I switched from ASL to a more gestured form of communication and it worked much better than the official languages.

Travelling back to Prague alone to catch my flight home was not a pleasant experience:

A ticket agent came to ask me for my ticket. For some reason she started to flail her arms and spew words. I took my notebook out to communicate with her, only to find

out that she did not know how to write English. A passenger in the same cubicle could write English and we started this three-way communication. For whatever reasons, perhaps my not asking questions, or the ticket agent not being informative, I ended up disembarking in Katowice – when I travelled from Budapest to Wrocław I had to change trains in this city and thought it would be the same routine - I was wrong. I got angry and upset. I explained my situation to a ticket agent in the train station and found out that the next train would not come for another eight hours. I decided to find a hostel or hotel because eight hours was a long wait and it was midnight. I must have asked at least five different people and looked at five different hotels/hostels. The sleeping facilities

were either full or could not be found due to bad directions or me being just so tired I couldn't find it. I was tired, sad, and wet. It was raining outside. At one point I started to cry. I started to head back to the train station but as I walked I decided to give it one more shot and walked further past the train station. Luckily there was a hostel hidden in a small driveway. I was so glad I pursued a place to sleep and even more glad I had not given up. Funny thing is the next morning I ran into Nancy Bolt and we exchanged email addresses and took our picture together. I thought to myself this was meant to happen. The same day I had the chance to explore more of Prague and visited the beautiful Strahov Library and Petrin Lookout Tower before heading home.



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see page 69 for details and costs

Library Map of the World launched at IFLA WLIC 2017!



LIBRARY MAP OF THE WORLD

Visualising the Power of the United Library Field



“The IFLA Library Map of the World¹ addresses the critical need of the library field to accurately collect and share basic information about the library landscape in countries around the world.

This year, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) has been liaising with national library associations, national libraries and other institutions across the world. They have collated existing library statistics in their countries and provided data on selected library performance metrics. The first version of the Library Map of

the World publishes library data from 75 countries across all regions of the world. Data collection will continue until the end of October this year when results will be analysed.

The Library Map of the World will be an annual activity, managed and maintained by IFLA to ensure a permanent home for the world's library data.

More than data!

To provide countries with evidence for library advocacy, the Library Map of the World will also provide access to United

Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) stories demonstrating how libraries in different countries contribute to the SDGs and serve as partners in meeting local development needs. A small number of best practice SDG stories are available to inspire more libraries and countries to contribute their stories to the site.

SDG Storytelling Guidelines will soon be released and the collection of stories will be continued and coordinated with activities within IFLA's International Advocacy Programme (IAP)² and International Leaders Programme (ILP).³

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¹ IFLA (2017) IFLA Library Map of the World. Available online: <https://librarymap.ifla.org/> (Accessed 16/10/2017)

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³ IFLA (2017) International Leaders Programme. Available online: <https://www.ifla.org/leaders> (Accessed 16/10/2017)

Further information:

IFLA (2017) Now online: IFLA Library Map of the World – an advocacy tool for all! Available online: <https://www.ifla.org/node/11579> (Accessed 16/10/2017)

Notes for contributors to Focus

Articles for publication in *Focus* are always welcome. *Focus* is not peer-reviewed, and articles are primarily intended to keep readers (who are professionals from a variety of different types of library and information services) informed about what is going on in the international library and information world, to introduce new ideas and programmes, report on activities and experiences, etc., rather than be 'academic treatises'.

Articles are normally between 1,500 and 2,000 words, though can be a little longer if necessary. The inclusion of references and URLs/links to further information is valuable, as are relevant photos (640 × 480 at 300dpi), if appropriate.

Focus is published in March, July and November.

Copy deadline is normally the end of January, May and September, respectively.

Please e-mail material for consideration to the editor at ilifocus@cipilip.org.uk

Articles should normally not have been previously published,
or be under consideration elsewhere.

IFLA Global Vision update

By Gerald Leitner, IFLA Secretary General

“Colleagues from around the world, Thank you so much for voting and contributing to the IFLA Global Vision discussion! We have an incredible result. When the voting ended on Monday 16th October, we had received 22,000 votes from 213 countries and areas of the world, from 190 out of 193 UN Member States. This is a fantastic response!

You have made this a truly global conversation with votes coming from every single continent. But, this was just the beginning!

We are preparing even more exciting things for the next stage!

Our team is now analysing the results of this global discussion, including the kick-off meeting, the regional workshops, the self-organised workshops and the online voting. It is really an intense process, since we want to ensure that all voices are heard!

Next March, at the IFLA President’s meeting, we will launch the IFLA Global Vision report. Then we will discuss with you how we can bring the vision to reality. This has been an enormous success and a wonderful journey. Stay tuned for news. Keep the discussion going, by using the #iflaglobalvision hashtag in Twitter!

If this was just the start, imagine that, what is coming next, will be even more inspiring!

Don’t forget: Together we create the future! Thank you so much for your contribution.”

Source: <https://www.ifla.org/node/11895>

Erasmus Staff Exchange Trip

By Nigel Buckley*

The Erasmus Programme has supported those wishing to study abroad within Europe for the past thirty years, enabling students to participate in cross-cultural learning experiences and creating partnerships between academic institutions across borders. It is less widely known that the Erasmus Programme also sponsors visits to other European countries for those who work within academia, including library staff. Here is an account of one such visit, in this case to Technical University of Cologne (TH Köln) Germany by Nigel Buckley from Kingston University in summer 2017:

I arrived in Cologne at midnight due to a late flight from Manchester and was woken at 7am by the sound of the Dom (Cologne Cathedral) bell ringers. After breakfast I walked along



The stairs leading up to the main campus at TH Köln

the river, past the Dom and then along the walkway running alongside Museum Ludwig to the bridge, with its flocks of cyclists speeding past walls of love locks covering each side, floor to handrail. My first appointment was with Dr Bautsch, the Library Director, who wanted to meet me before introducing my host for the week.

Dr Bautsch and I had a long chat about student expectations, customer service, and designing spaces for students. What became apparent was that we work in very similar organisations, with the same frustrations, including furniture, IT infrastructure, copyright, electronic content, and staffing. When I met my host, Anna, I immediately noticed that

Nigel Buckley was recently appointed as Librarian at the Alpine Club (London) and works as an Information Advisor at Kingston University. Nigel also chairs the UK Forum for Interlending (FIL).



she wasn't well at all. She had come into work just to meet me, so I said that I completely understood that she should be at home. I then went on a tour of the library and made my own way to the south campus for my meeting at the International Office.

On my tour of the library in Deutz, I noticed students were leaving their things on tables. When I asked how staff tackled potential problems with theft, they explained that they have a procedure involving a simple slip that the students fill out with the time they leave their desk. Students then have sixty minutes to return before staff take the belongings into lost property.



*An example of zone signage at TH Köln
("Ruhezone" means "Quiet Zone")*

The students all have a 'multi-card' which gives them access to print, loans, door access; they top this up with money that they can also buy food and drink with. They can use the card to pay fines too and it even gives them free travel on the rail and bus travel network for the state!

I then had a presentation from the International Office about the university and its make-up, and about Cologne in general – did you know Cologne has a long, proud history of hosting a carnival every year.

My next meeting was with the interloans team. I was immediately struck by how differently the operation is run, both on the small and large scale. The system works in state networks that feed in to a larger country-wide system.



*Handy shelf located in the middle of
each bay of books.*



The library provides an ear plug vending machine. As you can see it's only one quarter full, suggesting that it is a popular service.

Cologne works with the [HBZ](#)¹ (Hochschulbibliothekskurs des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen) which acts as the central point for interloans in the state but also make other products and systems for libraries. So each request feeds into a central system used by all libraries, which means that all libraries can see each request and who has the request assigned to them, as well as its complete history. The way the assigning works is that there is a list of all the libraries and each month the order of the list changes so the library that had the least requests then moves to the top priority for assigning. This way each library gets the chance to supply. The consortia are as follows:

- [Common Library Network](#)² (GBV) - union of scientific libraries and, in some cases, also public libraries from the federal states of Bremen, Hamburg, Mecklenburg-West Pomerania, Lower Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, Schleswig-Holstein, Thuringia and the Foundation of Prussian Cultural Heritage.
- [North Rhine-Westphalian Library Service Center](#)³ (HBZ) - union of scientific libraries in North Rhine-Westphalia and much of Rhineland-Palatinate.
- [Hessisches Bibliotheksinformationssystem](#)⁴ (HeBIS) - union of scientific libraries in Hessen and parts of Rhineland Palatinate.
- [Cooperative Library Network Berlin-Brandenburg](#)⁵ (KOBV) - union of scientific libraries in Berlin und Brandenburg.
- [Southwest German Library Consortium](#)⁶ (SWB) - union of scientific libraries in Baden-Württemberg, Saxony and Saarland with the Library Service Centre Baden-Württemberg (BSZ).
- [Bavarian Library Network](#)⁷ (BVB) - union of over 100 libraries in Bavaria.

The libraries then either post the books, or send them in batches to the central point via a van (which is cheaper) and they are collected from the central headquarters. These are



The ground floor of the library with OPACs, the help desk, and their journals display

then delivered by the institutional vans back to the requester. The TH Köln interlibrary loans team also scan chapters with Bookeye - a very large scanner. This emails the chapter automatically by scanning a barcode on the request and sending it on to the requester.

All students at TH Köln can get a username and password to use other university libraries, meaning they can access electronic resources. I wanted to find out more about sharing eBooks as I understood German libraries to be operating some sort of sharing model, similar to the sharing model that I have seen in consortia of Welsh libraries that can give access to

students in the same consortium. To an extent this was the case but often they cannot lend the resources due to the terms and conditions. They did put some on CD to lend out, which I thought was a useful work-around.

I spent my second morning with the planning and design manager, who is currently preparing for a new library extension. We discussed student behavior, furniture and zoning, as well as 'energy in the library' which at first I took to mean a new age phenomenon but fortunately the conversation ended up involving my favourite topic: power sockets and different ways of delivering power to study spaces, which led me to admit to my recurring dream of



The first floor of the library where they have used low-level shelving and higher shelving around the edge of the room.

wireless charging on all tables. I went to see the library store in the afternoon where they keep special collections and print journals, something which students have to request physically, as they do not scan normally. The university's fine structure is £2 in the first week late, £5 second week, £10 third week, £15 fourth week, and it doesn't matter when in the week the book is returned, they pay the full-week charge.

After work I stopped off in a bar for a few glasses of Kölsch - the locally-brewed very light type of beer which comes in a very short glass and must be drunk quickly. As soon as I went in, people began to talk to

me and I ended up spending an hour or so with Karl, a local priest who wanted to discuss Brexit...what else, of course! The talk of Brexit led to the long history of connection between Cologne and Britain, explaining the story behind the eleven flames of the flag of Cologne, which honours Saint Ursula and her entourage of eleven thousand virgins who lost their heads when Ursula refused to marry Attila the Hun in Cologne.

I met Anna, my host, properly for the first time on Wednesday and discussed their Library Management System (LMS). They use the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC). We then walked to the [Academy of](#)



A free phone charging station in a local café.

Media Arts Library⁸ (KHM). We had a tour of the library which was a very nice. It is in one of the oldest buildings in Cologne - half ruin, half modern, with large windows and stained glass. The only loan period is Thursday to Monday and there are no fines. However, if you fail to bring things back on time a total of three times, you are blocked from borrowing. They buy mostly print journals (80ish) but have some electronic content. Their printers are not really adequate but they have a very good overhead scanner to supplement them. The very large oversize windows open inwards, leaving huge square holes to the outside over study desks. In addition to loan services, students can save books without borrowing in large shopping baskets, filling out a slip to have them stored temporarily. I also discovered here that kick stools are called Elefantenfuß

On my fourth day I gave a presentation on my work at Kingston. This charted several projects that I've been involved in, such as touchstone

tours, the iCat (library search) usability project and the new Primo catalogue, as well as our mobile library. I also ended with giving an overview of our service and the designs for our new building. The presentation went really well and everyone had lots of questions. Interest was shown in the KU Big Read project too. Afterwards we went to the International School of Design for a tour and then we spent the evening at their Degree Show and party. The campus has a very similar feel to Kingston School of Art but their library service is not so much catered for them – their library is a small part of the main library and is not designed for their needs.

After the party Anna walked me through Cologne along the river, pointing out interesting buildings and giving me a little flavour of Cologne's history.

My final day (which did come very quickly) started with coffee and goodbyes and then a visit to the Games Lab, which I had heard a lot about all week. They demonstrated some of the games that they are working on, which are all 'serious games' for museums and training. One game that I saw is an augmented reality multiplayer for the Roman museum in Cologne. Anna told me about a game for libraries which is a virtual reality game for inductions, in which participants would exist in a virtual library, constructing search terms and learning to navigate what sounded like a sort of infosphere in order to progress. More information



The feedback book which has its own table.

tour for all their libraries, which has proved to be very popular, as well as a [YouTube channel](#)⁹.

To summarise, my feelings on completing this exchange: I feel that it was hugely worthwhile visit as I've made connections with like-minded professionals hundreds of miles away, and I'm certain they will visit when in London. This trip made the world feel a little smaller and made me realise that users, and indeed people in general, behave in very odd ways wherever they are. Trying to create a service for everyone is difficult but everywhere shares similar problems. The University is very similar to Kingston. Continuing to share our

will be sent to me regarding this one. The Games Lab is an interdisciplinary centre with the film school and design school. They also share a library with film and take on projects together. The library lends out games consoles, games and has a huge film collection, as well as providing online access to Steam (which they have an institutional subscription for) which gives online access to games and hosts multiplayer. The library also provides an audio



The Mini Bib which I saw in the park. People in the park can borrow books for use in the park and they are not required to register



Book reserve baskets

experiences and solutions to problems will benefit both organisations. On completing the week, I discussed my

time with colleagues in Köln and they felt that they had learned a lot. This made me feel proud to have given something in return.



After my visit I took the train to the Alps for the weekend.

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[@CILIP_ILIG](https://twitter.com/CILIP_ILIG)

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UK Library Tour Report

By Maynard Chipangura*

Background to the tour

The British Council 2005 Strategy of reducing its footprint saw the closure of most British Council libraries globally but Zimbabwe managed to “hide” her libraries from the menace, as if by a miracle. This move left Zimbabwe libraries isolated with no regional support or fellow countries to negotiate the new trajectory in the provision on libraries and information services. In South Asia there were massive demonstrations. The public resisted the closures and thankfully they succeeded. The library landscape is fast changing the world-over, driven by the continuous developments and disruptions in Information Technology. Zimbabwe’s libraries find themselves isolated and overwhelmed by information overload and ever-changing user needs and information-seeking behaviours. At the beginning of the year, two library and information service consultants were hired to map a strategy that would see our two libraries offering 21st Century information services. They recommended that there was a need to draw lessons from highly advanced libraries in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK). It is against this background that I undertook the tour.

The objectives of the tour

To learn from good practice from the UK in the areas of library management, innovation, service delivery and

performance evaluation. With the following themes :

- a) Modernising library services to meet 21st Century standards
- b) Focus on good space usage
- c) Innovative digital technologies
- d) Learning
- e) Outreach
- f) Programmes of events and activities
- g) Marketing, audience identification and priorities
- h) Performance (outcomes) evaluation
- i) Membership management and meeting the expectations of paying members.
- j) Maintain relations with British Libraries

The outcome of the tour objectives (recommendations)

a) Modernising library services to 21st Century compliancy

- Koha – There is a need to make our Library Management System (LMS) compatible with our colleagues in South Asia, in order to read from the same page and derive other benefits:
- Koha (an open-source Integrated Library System [ILS]) will enable us to connect to some South Asian online resources and will enable us to take online payments
- It will enable interlibrary services between Harare and Bulawayo Libraries

**Maynard Chipangura is a Knowledge & Information Officer at British Council*

- Open Public Access Catalogues (OPACs) and mobile library catalogues will result in better customer service
- It will promote library self-service and the ability to browse the shelves virtually
- Generation of reports like loans, payments, membership, overdue books etc will be possible.

Koha can offer us 21st Century library services but there is still a need to thoroughly understand the value Koha will add to our library offer and to assess whether the existing infrastructure has the capacity and is compatible to run it.

- *Online resources, eBooks and eJournals*: there is no need to re-emphasise the importance of electronic resources in 21st Century libraries, home and away. Hence our LMS should be compatible with South Asia to derive some access, or else we pursue the Zimbabwe University Librarians Consortium (ZULC) option on full throttle. These resources will make our libraries accessible 24/7 and could see new customers from remote areas signing up for membership with us, thereby increasing our reach and influence.

b) Focus on good space usage

- DVD security tags: It is a security tag and only the library can remove

it properly. The case usually gets destroyed if you try to force it open. The Red Tag System for both business and general DVDs offers a cheaper security option and will afford us the opportunity to do away with the parallel shelving currently in use. It will also create more space for other materials.

- Inspiring environment : The library should inspire people to use it. This includes a good reading ambiance, social meeting space, events space, signage and displays that are magnificent in order to attract attention. All of these elements are important. Strategic use of our garden in Harare and the large space in Bulawayo will give our libraries space to do more events and other projects. Our libraries should be inclusive and accommodate all business, arts, exams and children's activities.

c) Innovative digital technologies

- Website: Our libraries and their activities are not well articulated on the current website. There is a need to make them more visible.
- Online Newsletter – there is a need for a two-way communication between the libraries and the community through an online newsletter with a feedback platform. Information on new titles, events and other updates will be easily disseminated.
- Free WIFI – it is now standard in

most if not all UK libraries. This will attract and increase traffic which can then be converted into library membership.

- Mounted iPads giving access to UK newspapers may be a cheaper option than subscribing to these, which costs a lot of money.

d) Learning

- CPD and Lifelong learning :The field of librarianship is ever expanding and changing, from expanding Internet and media technologies, to ever diverse patron groups with increasingly complex information needs. Library professionals need to be as savvy as the clients they serve and the most productive and effective way for library staff to keep up with these changes is to seek out professional development opportunities. Librarians owe it to their clients and to themselves as competent professionals to remain abreast of trends and developments in the field.
- Study tours, attending conferences, under-study work, professional courses in LIS such as those accredited by CILIP and training in the use of social media technologies such web 2.0 skills will be useful in skilling and re-skilling our staff, making them more competent workers.
- CreatorSpace / MakerSpace: This is the latest concept in librarianship, whereby users/clients explore and

create tangible things using these new technologies. The MakerSpace has changed the face of library science, from “a building or room containing collections of books”, to a place where creative people can gather, create, invent, and learn industrial skills like 3D printing; animation; desktop publishing; digital cutter for craft work; digital sewing and embroidery; audio and video editing; art and craft. Libraries as creators of knowledge and information, as well as enablers for decision-making in the 21st Century are becoming tangible products, contributing to capacity development, equipping individuals and promoting economic growth.

Working with the British Council's Arts Strategic Business Unit (SBU) we can actually start and run our own MakerSpaces using the vast experience of a basket-making project we did with the European Union. Through the library working with other SBUs, ministries, universities and companies, as well as the public, we can create demand for these skills.

e) Outreach

- Pushing beyond our library's walls to reach our community or “the extending of services or assistance beyond current or usual limits”. This can take many different forms in order to be visible and active in our community. In fact, many of these activities are regularly scheduled on an annual calendar.

- Joint outreach activities with the British Embassy and the Department for International Development (DfID) in the UK will increase our reach to other parts of the country, achieving better understanding of our products and services and enhancing our impact.
- Decentralising the Management Express (MEX) Forum to other towns and cities is worth pursuing.
- Crafting an agreed outreach calendar at the beginning of year with other entities is essential.

f) Programmes of events and activities

- Children's library – Yes, we might not have the capacity to run a children's library at this point in time, despite Book Aid International's willingness to donate 2.5k of children's books. Quarterly children's activities involving, storytelling, drama, reading challenges, debates etc will, however, be important in cultural pollination at that tender age. Bev Cox of Warwick Libraries is ready to help with the programming.
- Working with partners such as Harare City Library, Ruwa Children's Library and Book Aid International's "Children's Corners" project could be critical.
- Social space – there is a need for our libraries to be more inclusive. Outsourcing a café, or providing a drink/coffee dispenser machine will increase not only traffic but income as well.

g) Marketing Audience identification and priorities

- There has been increasing pressure on libraries to mobilise resources and become self-reliant. Library users are transforming into customers with rising expectations, diverse needs and wants, as well as choices. Now the real challenge for libraries is not to manage the collection, staff and technology but to turn these resources into services. The notion of services has also changed, from basic to value-added, from staff assisted to self-service, from in-house to outreach, from free to priced, from reactive to pro-active, and from mass customization to individualised services.
- The Medium: Promotional activities can take many forms and the promotional media will depend on the nature of the target audience and on promotional objectives. These may include a) telephone campaigns b) email c) newsletters, d) exhibitions, e) radio & television, newspapers, roadshows etc.
- Mounted computer-display screens: computer screen savers mounted on the wall. These improve the ambiance in the library while giving important information /instructions/ rules/notices/upcoming events/ adverts about products relating to exams/MEX Forums. This is especially

powerful when located in strategic positions such as the receptions as these work as noticeboards. Pop-up shop organisations and individuals can promote their services and products for a fee.

h) Performance (outcomes) evaluation

- Library Mission Statement : A library's mission statement is important as spelling out the objectives of the library and how it contributes to the overall country plan, as well as how it is going to be at the centre of all SBUs activities (as the hub or centre of it all). It will offer the direction the library should take and a benchmark to evaluate this against. The implementation of Koha LMS will provide a lot of statistical information that will help us assess each library's outcome.

i) Membership management and meeting the expectations of the paying members can be summarised as below:

- Access from multiple locations
 - Making more resources available
 - Making information available in rawer forms
 - Diminishing roles for intermediaries

If we can meet the above characteristics, our libraries will be 21st Century compliant and are bound to have a greater impact, a better reach and a much-appreciated service.

j) Maintain relations with British libraries

- There is a need to maintain the bridges built between our libraries and the British ones, especially Birmingham Business Centre Library and the British Library Business & IP Centre, in order to promote trade and investment between the two countries. This will help us answer some business inquiries which we could not address in the past

My Personal Discoveries

Following my tour of libraries in the UK, I discovered that the use of libraries is not the same everywhere and that there are several variants in the use, handling, storage and retrieval of information. There is no one-size-fit all in providing library services even in the UK itself. Every community has got its own information behaviour. Below are some of the elements we need to consider before we implement any changes

1. **Culture:** people's culture defines how they appreciate and use libraries. The British are an upright, honest people and are not as corrupt as elsewhere – hence in some libraries users are left by themselves in libraries well after hours and the use of the self-service library software is enhanced.
2. **Value of libraries:** although the Zimbabwean Government sees education as a cornerstone for the economic development of

this country, they do not seem to give the same preference to the development of libraries in schools, cities and towns, hence the snail pace of economic growth.

3. **Appetite for information:**

there is greater appetite for information in the UK compared to Zimbabwe. In the UK people want to research on the history of their house, church, or school before or after work. Children as young as new born babies are registered library members for rhymes and storytimes

4. **Uses of libraries:**

in the UK libraries are used to solve community problems. Topics like diseases, for instance cancer, HIV and Aids, as well as other conditions, for instance stress, depression, social isolation and addictions like drugs and alcoholism are all discussed in libraries through the provision of the relevant information, games and play, counselling and health information clubs.

5. **Budgetary cuts:**

although there are budgetary cuts, libraries are coming up with survival strategies and some are changing their form and shape.

6. **The Profession:**

is more coherent and is well appreciated and respected in the UK compared to Zimbabwe.

7. **Volunteers :**

libraries in the UK are very reliant on volunteer labour.

8. **Wifi:**

is free in most if not all libraries I visited.

9. **Events and activities :**

most libraries visited incorporated some events and activities and hives of activities both during day and at night.

10. **Coordinated approach:**

there is no stand-alone approach in the UK library system. Activities are coordinated centrally. The Children's Holiday Reading Challenge is an example of national library events participated in by all school children.

11. **History and heritage:**

the British are very proud and preserve their history and it is well documented. eg castles, museums, letters, pictures etc

12. **Children's Libraries:**

there is a lot of emphasis on the catching them young concept and creating tomorrow's library user.

13. **Maker Space / Creator Space:**

is the new model of librarianship in the UK whereby information / knowledge is turned into something tangible eg 3D printing, embroidery thereby contributing to the country's economic growth.



Maynard with Sylvia Grabowska at this year's CLIP conference in Manchester

The benefits I derived from the tour

I benefitted in the following ways from my tour of the UK libraries:

- It improved my self-confidence and self-esteem
- I gained greater understanding of the British people and their culture
- I gained a better understanding of the UK geography and the different characteristics of the cities
- I learnt of lot of British history and understood how much they value it
- It increased my aspirations and motivation
- It enhanced team-working and communication skills between us, the UK and South Asia as we can now read from the same page.
- It broadened my understanding of UK society
- I was able to build bridges between our libraries and our UK counterparts
- I managed to meet with some of our suppliers and went through their work processes, giving me a better understanding of these companies and how they do what they do.

Conclusion

We definitely learn from other people's experiences, since we do not live in a vacuum. The tour brought the things we learnt in library school into reality; it combined my imaginations with the real world. The tour and the CILIP conference in Manchester were positive teaching tools that helped me enhance my social, personal and emotional development, as well as my love for the profession. Extra stimulation in new environments particularly benefitted me, building my professional skills, and social skills. The tour also improved my independence and self-confidence.

I would like to applaud my Director Sam Harvey for being a visionary leader who realised the importance of the tour and its contribution in taking our libraries to the next level. I would also like to highlight her contribution to meeting our country objectives. Her ever-lasting support for our libraries' work in both Harare and Bulawayo is second to none. I THANK YOU SAM. I would also like to thank CILIP for giving me a grant to attend the Conference in Manchester and for the organising everything, including accommodation, during the Conference. Well done. Last but not least, I would like to show my appreciation for the solid efforts of John Dolan and Ayub Khan for crafting the programme and making all the arrangements and appointments – Gentlemen you made my tour memorable - it will stick with me to my final resting place.

International Awards Roundup

Travelling Librarian Award Winner

Congratulations to Sara Pritchard, Schools Library Services Manager for Shropshire and Telford upon receiving the CILIP and English-Speaking Union (ESU) Travelling Librarian Award for 2017.

Sara is touring joint use libraries which have made the most of library spaces shared with schools and public communities in New Zealand.

Nick Poole, CILIP Chief Executive Officer, said:

“We’re very pleased that Sara will be bringing back ideas that help the UK library sector to understand how library services can be designed in flexible ways to provide maximum benefit for communities as a whole, supporting children’s formal education alongside lifelong opportunities for adults. We look forward to the benefits of Sara’s learning from this exchange.”

Zoë Adams, Cultural Exchange Officer at the English-Speaking Union said:

“We’re delighted to be supporting Sara’s project, which, in line with the ESU’s core aims and values, will promote true cultural exchange and international understanding. We’re looking forward to seeing how she is able to implement her findings in her home community, and beyond.”

The Travelling Librarian Award is a

opportunity to learn from international institutions and counterparts. The joint award is made under CILIP’s international policy to help members develop their professional roles by sharing expertise with overseas colleagues; and the ESU’s work to strengthen international understanding through cultural and educational programmes.

You can follow her adventures via her Twitter account here:

https://twitter.com/pritchard_sara

More information her tour can be found here:

<http://shropshire.gov.uk/news/2017/09/shropshire-school-library/>

Source: Shropshire Newsroom (2017) Shropshire school library lead to embark on international knowledge exchange.

EIFL Public Library Innovation Award

Source: John Fairbairn – Communications Manager, Electronic Information for Libraries (EIFL)

The new Electronic Information for Libraries Public Library Innovation Award - for public library services that improve lives - is now open for applications.

For more about the award – see the

info [here](#)¹.

The award is open to all public and community libraries in developing and transition countries that use digital technology to improve lives in their communities by addressing any of the following issues, which are included in the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

- Economic wellbeing and employment
- Farming and sustainable agriculture
- Health and hygiene
- Digital inclusion
- Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

- Education for all
- Climate change and other issues affecting the environment

The prize includes US\$1,500 and wide publicity through EIFL's global communication channels and networks.

The deadline for submitting applications is 11 January 2018.

Applications will be accepted in English, French, Russian and Spanish.

¹ EIFL (2017) Apply Now! EIFL Public Library Innovation Award [Online Available at: <http://www.eifl.net/news/apply-now-eifl-public-library-innovation-award-11>] [Accessed 28 Nov 2017]

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

CILIP ILIG INFORMALS AND MEETINGS

CILIP ILIG Informals

Wednesday 14 February 2018 at CILIP Head Office

Leanne Young: Travelling Librarian Award

Leanne Young, from Sunderland, was the 2016 recipient of the Travelling Librarian Award. Leanne will talk about her experiences travelling around the USA, from Arizona to San Francisco, exploring innovative distance learning initiatives and practices at six higher education libraries.

Further details available via CILIP website: <http://bit.ly/2lhelgk>

Wednesday 11 April 2018 at CILIP Head Office

ILIG AGM with CILIP President Ayub Khan

Ayub Khan will talk on how CILIP sees its international agenda

Wednesday 9 May 2018 ILIG Informal (details TBC)

Ferelith Horden: IBBY

(International Board on Books for Young People)

Wednesday 10 October ILIG informal (details TBC)

Stephan Roman

(Honorary Fellow 2017)

Please check the CILIP ILIG website nearer the time for further details:

Informals are friendly and informative gatherings. They are aimed at anyone who has an interest in the international library and information scene. Generally there is no charge and our Informals allow plenty of time for networking and free refreshments.

IFLA World Library and Information Congress 2018

24-30 August 2018

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions
84th Annual General Conference and Assembly - Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

More information: <https://2018.ifla.org/>

Keep up to date with CILIP ILIG via its web pages at www.cilip.org.uk/ilig

