



Post-Lib



RPG Committee 2019

Chair: Sian King

chair.rpg@cilip.org.uk

Secretary: Sheron Burton

secretary.rpg@cilip.org.uk

Treasurer: Judith Allery

treasurer.rpg@cilip.org.uk

Post-Lib Editor: Christiana Ikeogu

editor.rpg@cilip.org.uk

christieikeogu@gmail.com

Web Editor: Alan Cooper

info.rpg@cilip.org.uk

Marketing and Communications:

Mrs Sian King

chair.rmg@cilip.org.uk

Visits Organiser:

Charmaine Bourton

charmainebourton11@hotmail.co.uk

Other Committee members

Alison Hall

Ian Orton

ianorton5@gmail.com

Joan Woollatt

For general enquiries about the Retired Professionals Group please contact
info.rpg@cilip.org.uk

For changes in membership circumstances
contact membership@cilip.org.uk

Contents

Chair's note

Sian King 2

Editor's introduction

Christiana Ikeogu 3

News and views

Looking at the year ahead 4

Trending

A school library in the sixties 7

Retired but not retiring 10

Life after retirement 12

Events and announcements 13

Book Review 14



Sian King

Many of my efforts, as Chair of RPG, focus on representing the interests of the group in a number of ways. In 2019, this has included:

- Writing contents about our group for the CILIP volunteering recruitment campaign launching in 2020
- Participating in the CILIP Member Networks Co-design Steering group. This has involved monthly online meetings with Paul Caton and, sometimes, Nick Poole to suggest and discuss our grass-roots ideas for the future of CILIP
- Attending a seminar given by the south-west regional group on volunteering in libraries
- Attending a focus group run by a company called Membership Matters in Cardiff. These were commissioned by CILIP as one strand in their consultative exercise to obtain feedback on many aspects of CILIP membership. For example, why do some information professionals join CILIP, whilst others do not.
- Starting work with a new mentee for CILIP certification. I have mentored a number of candidates over the last 14 years, mainly for chartership, and found it an enriching experience as well as keeping me in touch with younger members of our profession.

It seems good, as retired professionals, to try to give something back to our professional body in these ways. We can usually offer experience from many years of work in a great variety of different libraries, as long as we are mindful that things have, and always will change! Nevertheless, the basic driving principles remain the same, and are well demonstrated in CILIP's Professional Knowledge and Skills Base <https://www.cilip.org.uk/general/custom.asp?page=PKSB>

As always, please send me any comments, suggestions or offers of help to ensure that the Retired Professionals Group is meeting the needs of its members. **PL**



Welcome to the 90th edition of CILIP RPG's

Post-Lib

Christiana Ikeogu

WHAT a relief that we have entered into 2020 in peace, and with less strife as to who will be at No 10 Downing Street. As our Chief Executive, Nick Poole said in the December issue of the *Information Professional* magazine, 'Boris Johnson offered his support (for libraries) when quizzed over public library cuts on the Andrew Marr Show'. What is left for all of us now is to maintain the pressure on the government to deliver what the Conservative Party promised. Every party knows how much libraries transform lives right across the globe. We therefore need to support our colleagues at the CILIP HQ in promoting the profession.

Coming back to our own RPG, it is with great delight that I welcome your encouraging emails on the impact of the articles in the past issues, and how they have inspired some of you to want to do life differently. My gratitude, as always goes to Sian, our Chair who has not relented in checking how things are moving with the *Post-Lib*. In this edition, she has not only sent in the usual greetings to us, but also contributed an article on her life since retirement. From her documentation, it is obvious that she has not been living a quiet sedate life since walking out of full-time employment. I think her life must be greatly enriched now than before retirement.

I will like to draw your attention to what Maurice Wakeham's article about a school library service in the sixties. It took me back to my secondary school days, in a remote town in Nigeria in the sixties. As the library prefect, I was responsible for guarding the small collection of mainly textbooks and a few fiction materials in a bookcase. It was quite a treasure to the school. Has Maurice got you thinking of an aspect of your school or library experience to share with us?

We are still talking about living the retirement life to the full. I was moved by Tim Latham's insistence to remain active. Do you fall into any of the categories mentioned? Check out his observations and find out where you would like to belong – spending time in a canal; writing a book and/or studying? Be sure to visit: boom.org.uk and find out what Tim has in store for you.

Please continue to see *Post-Lib* as your instrument for making a change in our community and society. Keep connecting – your contributions are highly valued. Lastly, do not forget to attend our very own popular lunch in April. Wishing you a healthy active 2020 and beyond. **PL**

What 2020 holds for us

Comments from the *Mature Times*

What do we want for 2020?

The start of a New Year, and therefore the time for reflection. In her speech on Christmas Day the Queen acknowledged that 2019 had been "quite a bumpy year". As understatement goes, I think that one is just about right.

Here are some of the things we would like to see happen this year:

AS we say in our front page story of this edition the biggest issue that older people will want to see addressed, or at least substantial progress being made towards solving the problem is in relation to Social Care. This has been neglected for so long and so many people have had to suffer, and suffer quite needlessly as a result. It is good to see that the government have made substantial commitments towards trying to find a cross party solution to the problem, but let's not kid ourselves, this is a problem that is going to be difficult to resolve. The chances of finding a solution that is acceptable to all are slim indeed but all we can do is watch the progress that is made and ensure that this issue doesn't slip back down the political agenda and again get side-lined.

The question of free TV licences for older people is another area that needs to be resolved as this universal benefit will not be available to all from the beginning of June this

year, – instead it will become a means tested benefit. It seems like our prime minister is on a collision course with the BBC with his various pronouncements over the last few months. What is certain is that for now, from June many older people are going to be worse off by having to pay for their TV licences. This is an issue that many older peoples charities are continuing to campaign on – all we can say is that we support the provision of free TV licences for all over 75s – so watch this space as we will continue to keep you updated on progress as this debate continues to rumble on.

The NHS and our Health Service is another area that we need to see substantial progress on – and again it is good to see that the government has put this at the front of their political agenda with the announcements of significant investment in these services. Once again though the proof of the pudding is in

Next Issue

Materials for the next issue should reach the editor by Monday 6th April 2020.

Please send as a Word document attachment and email to christieikeogu@gmail.com. Alternatively, post a typed copy to Christiana Ikeogu, 130 Elphinstone Road, London E17 5EX. Contact by phone will also be appreciated on 07957 726 215.

Please note that articles presented in Post-Lib are not necessarily opinions of the editor or the RPG Committee.



the eating – and we need to see significant progress made towards achieving improvements not just for older people but for society as a whole. We must, however, also acknowledge that change and improvements will take time to implement and to come on stream so we must be patient as well. However, I think most people are quite rational and as long as we can see that progress is being made and that the promises that have been given are being implemented, and then we can accept that whilst improvements will take time, they will eventually come to benefit us all.

Public transport is another area where we need to see investment and commitments made. Unfortunately too much of our public transport system is run for profit and not as a public service anymore and this puts pressure on services, particularly those that don't pay their way. Unfortunately it is those very services that tend to be used more by older people, especially in rural areas. Without access to good public transport, older people can be reluctant to go out and that therefore

causes social isolation and loneliness. As we all know, loneliness can have many adverse health effects on people, meaning they may need to rely on our overstretched NHS more and more – do you recognise that vicious circle? I know I do!

We also need to give serious thought to how we tackle pensioner poverty which is on the rise again. It is abhorrent that in an advanced and forward thinking country like the UK an estimated one in six pensioners live in poverty. This is a stain on our society and one that should be eradicated. It is clear that there is much to be done in the year ahead and rest assured us, here at *Mature Times* will continue to do our best to champion the rights and views of older people. Whatever area it is, if it affects older people, then we want to bring this to your attention and campaign to eradicate the issue that make life difficult for older people.

What would you like to see change? Write to us at the normal address or email. [PL](#)

*Extract from the **Mature Times**, January 2020.*

A school library in the sixties

Maurice Wakeham



Pupils working in the Library (possibly early 1960s).

Photo by Mr K Fudge, from Woking County Grammar School for Boys Jubilee Souvenir. 1914-1964. (1964) courtesy of Peter Fergusson

I was interested by Ian McCracken's article in the RPG's Post-Lib magazine of May 2019 about establishing an archive to celebrate the centenary of Govan High School. I read it as I made a coincidental discovery, during a bout of decluttering of a batch of my old school's magazines. Thumbing through these for, perhaps, the first time in decades (or possibly ever), I found that they each included a section described as "*Library Notes*". How interesting would it be, I thought, from the vantage point of a retired librarian, to have a look at these to see what this particular library might have been concerned with? And, having lived through those years, would any of it mean anything to me?

A little background

The school was Woking County Grammar

School for Boys and the school magazine was called, with inspiration typical of its publisher, "*The Magazine*". I have to hand, 14 issues dating from 1964 to 1970 with an average page count of 30 pages. The contents usually consist of a chronicle of school events, letters from old boys, endless reports of sporting events and club activities, "House Notes", various literary writings and notes from the Parents' Association and the Old Wokingians' Association.

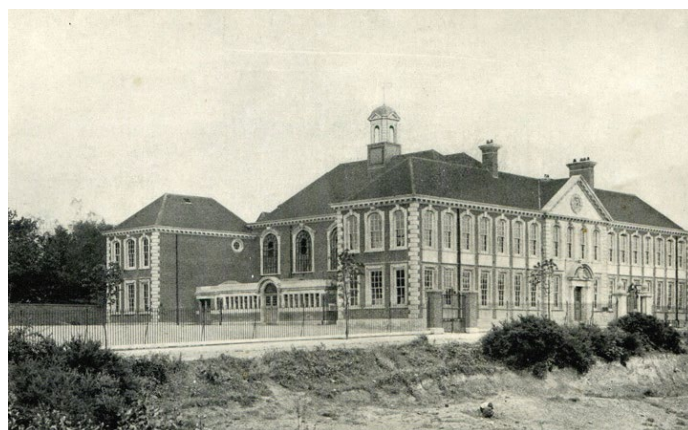
In 1964 the School was celebrating its first 50 years. When it opened in 1914 as the Woking County Secondary School for Boys and Technical Institute, it represented the only site of secondary education in the Borough. It was renamed the Woking County Grammar School for Boys in 1946. Fortunately for an article

such as this, Mr Butterworth, the “Master responsible for the Library” and author of the Library Notes, decided to give a ‘brief history’ of the library in the March 1964 edition of *The Magazine*. From this we learnt that the Library opened in the spring of 1916 in a small room on the balcony at the back of the Great Hall. By 1919 it housed 800 volumes. These were classified into 14 categories including Legends, Fiction, Games, Poetry and Belles Lettres, Hobbies and Mechanics.

Pupils borrowing books were asked to cover them and make any repairs needed. It was intended to add some reference books and make the room more useful for senior boys to study in. From the 1920s there was a book club which circulated periodicals to members, who paid 6d per person, per book, per term. Popular publications in the thirties were *Scientific American*, *Popular Wireless*, *The Boy's Own Paper*, *Railway* magazine, *Motor*, and *Armchair Science*, among others. By the mid-thirties the library was also subscribing to *Punch* and *The Times*, courtesy of the Parents' Association.

The first “leaver's gift to the library” occurred in 1922. In 1941 the idea that, on leaving school, senior boys should donate a book to the library was revived, “so that they may be remembered after the hand of time has removed their autographs from the school premises and desk lids”. Mr B calculated that between 1950 and 1963 316 Old Boys and others had donated over 1051 volumes, some of which the library would not have been able to afford to purchase itself. All gifts were noted in *The Magazine*. Mr B was hoping to receive a record number of gifts in the Jubilee year.

The *Library Notes* only became a regular feature of *The Magazine* from 1952. During the 1950s extra steel shelving was added and the books were reclassified under the Dewey system. To make room for tables, to bring periodicals into the main library and increase study space, the library moved to the former Engineering Workshop (known as room 14 in 1964 apparently).



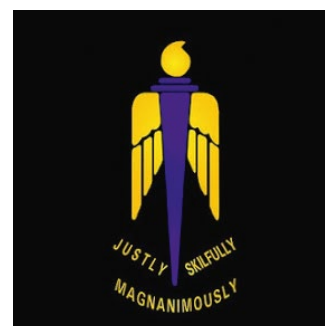
The School circa 1918 when it was known as Woking County Secondary School for Boys and Technical Institute. The Library block as opened in 1958 would appear at the far left of this picture.

Source: <http://wokinggrammar.blogspot.com>



Douglas Butterworth (BA), Master in charge of the Library, and School Second Master 1972-1977.

Source: <http://wokinggrammar.blogspot.com>

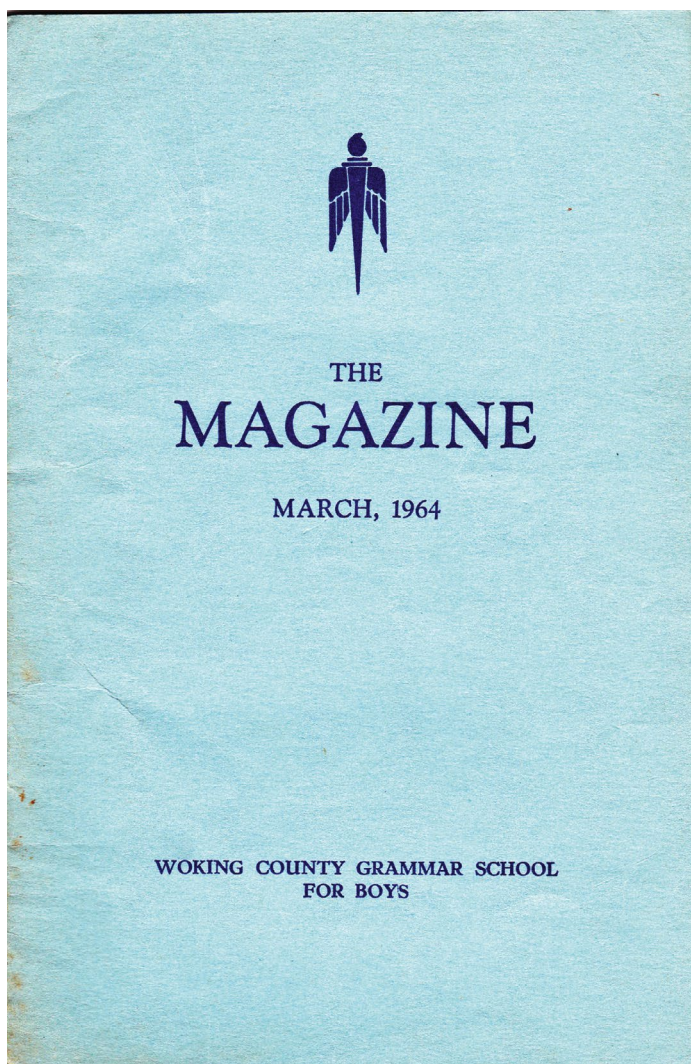


The School Badge and motto, adopted in 1932, from Milton's *Tractate on Education*.

Source: <http://wokinggrammar.blogspot.com>

In 1958 the library, incorporating a store and matching fittings and furniture, moved into the upper floor of a building newly erected on the Upper playground. Additional reference books and materials which had been held in departments were also incorporated into the new area. This is the library as I remember it. The library was open to all at lunchtimes (12.15 to 1.30) and the Sixth Form used it for private study during the day. First Forms apparently had Library Periods to introduce them to the Library but I have no memory of such lessons.

Mr B was obviously not happy with the way the Library was being used. Overcrowding could be a problem. He thinks pupils should be reading more and taking more care of the books and the fabric of the new building. In 1962 a Library Committee of elected representatives from each year group was established to “promote and encourage best use of the Library”. Mr B was also trying to collect two copies of each edition



The Magazine (later known as *The Wokingian*).
Source: the author

of *The Magazine* so that there could be a copy for use and another for reference. He was looking forward to receiving copies of magazines from Universities having received one from the Aberdeen University Forestry Society. In closing the March 1964 article Mr B duly listed the gifts recently made to the Library. Such lists were regular features of the *Library Notes*.

In the following issue of the magazine (July 1964) Mr B was able to thank two staff members for copies of some of the missing *Magazine* issues he required. Of the ten people listed for providing gifts in that issue, four were also members of staff. The autumn term saw a whole day exhibition in the Library of 1400 Penguin Books by the town bookshop to coincide with the Parents' Association AGM. In January 1965 Mr B was still bemoaning the overcrowding suffered by the library at lunchtimes and

some oversubscribed Sixth Form periods. The number of sixth formers had increased from 71 in 1960 to 143 in 1964. Over-use and possibly misuse of reference books was also causing concern, though a special grant noted in July 1965, provided for additional reference works. "[A] notable event in the life of any library" was the purchase of a major encyclopaedia. Hence the 1929 edition of *Chambers'* had at last been replaced. The July 1965 edition found *The Magazine* with a new name, equally imaginative, "*The Wokingian*".

In 1965 the School entered into an agreement with the Surrey School Library Service whereby they would loan batches of books, three books for every two boys on roll. By the end of 1966 the school had 910 volumes on loan. Half of these were fiction, the rest described as of general interest. For more specialised items, the library continued to depend on donations or gifts of money from leavers and friends of the school. Mr Seaman, for example, Senior Teacher of History, donated a copy of his own publication, "*Post-Victorian Britain 1902-1951*". Other donations that year included items on religion, computers, photography, poetry, fiction by John Buchan, Conan Doyle and C S Forester, biographies of Lenin and Mao Tse Tung and "*The Observer's Book of Flags*". In 1969, Nina Bawden, mother of old boy Richard and noted author, donated seven of her own novels. One regular donor was Mr G J Talbot, who was a teacher in the school and also editor of *The Magazine / Wokingian* throughout this period. Subscriptions to the *New Statesman* and *Punch* were also gratefully received. Occasionally whole private libraries were offered and the school took pride "in having played some part in developing such a wide interest and catholicity of taste" in one such donor. I was told that there was an anonymous pupil who would write in the front of some books words to the effect of "'donated by [some made-up name] in the hope that it will further the education of all mankind".

Mr B regularly expressed concern about the state of the dictionaries and atlases and the need, especially by the increasing numbers of sixth formers, to take care of them, given the cost of their replacement. The need for

additional shelving and study space was a constant theme in the late sixties. An exhibition of non-fiction paperbacks by the local Nancy Leigh Bookshop in September 1966 revealed that they could cost as much as 45/- (£2.25 in today's money).

The layout of the library that I remember consisted of an issue desk by the entrance. Library monitors were appointed to work there and generally supervise over lunch-times. Large tables with about five chairs were housed in alcoves, separated by high freestanding bookshelves on both sides of a central walkway. This arrangement made it difficult for supervisors to see what was happening within the alcoves. I have memories of water pistol fights within and between alcove groups. A friend remembers that metal book dividers were hung on blazer pockets so that when the unsuspecting pupil stood up there would be an almighty clattering on the lino floor. Most of us achieved reasonable exam results so we must have done some work as well. There were no individual study places.

According to the July 1969 *Wokingian* the shelving arrangement was changed, so that all the stacks were placed on the east side of the library and all the seating to the west. Some said this changed the character of the place but it did create space for additional shelving to cope with the increasing book stock. It also made room for more sixth formers to use the library for private study at any one time.

October 1969 saw a stock take by the County Library Service of the books it had loaned to the School. It came as a concern to all how many books were missing but the *Library Notes* do not specify how many were actually lost. Appeals were made to pupils past and present to track down the missing items. The last edition of *The Wokingian* I have is dated July 1970, the point at which I left the school. The *Library Notes* for that issue only made mention of a couple of monetary donations. (I tracked down later issues at the local county archive but no further mention was made of the Surrey books so I will probably



A twelve-year-old Maurice Wakeham and the author today.

never know how many of their volumes were finally retrieved.)

As has probably become clear, the person in overall charge of the library was Mr D J Butterworth. He was a large, red-faced man, conscientious and well respected. He joined the School in September 1948 as Senior Geography Teacher, and was Master-in-Charge of the Library from 1949 until 1972. As far as I know, he had no formal qualifications or training in library work. He held many positions within the School, becoming Second Master from 1972 to 1977, when the School closed. He became the Vice Principal of Woking College, the School's successor Institution, retiring in 1981.

My impression is that today's school libraries play a much more integrated part in the life of their institutions than mine seems to have been, despite Mr Butterworth's efforts. It is difficult to tell how well it was funded since no reference is made within the school magazine's *Library Notes* to budgetary issues, though the repeated emphasis on donations may give an indication. As for usage, it was clearly aimed at giving sixth formers a place to undertake private study and younger pupils access to worthy works. It could become overcrowded, not least on wet or cold lunchtimes. **PL**



Retired but not retiring

Tim Latham

"OK Boomer", is a phrase that has grown in usage during the last year or so. A definition provided in a *New York Times* article has it pretty well summed up as "a retort from the younger generations to the problem of older people who just don't get it". In other words Baby Boomers (now largely retired or semi-retired), who "just don't get it", who are viewed as disconnected from the reality of younger generations, who are maybe seen as hankering after an idealised world of a few decades ago.

We probably all know people to whom the "OK Boomer" epithet might apply; people who might wear their disconnectedness as a badge of honour. We wouldn't want to be so rude as to use the phrase, but they exist.

But my experience, working with very many professionals preparing for retirement, has been that a diametrically opposite group predominates. The vast majority of people in their 50s and 60s are really keen to engage even more actively with life, to experience new things, to meet new interesting people who may not look anything like themselves. It was this insight that led, last year, to the creation of "Boom" (boom.org.uk).

The issues

The issues that needed some form of solution were twofold:

Firstly, people in the early stages of retirement (typically aged in their 50s and 60s) fell into a

kind of "no man's land" in terms of "the market" taking no notice of them. No longer able to look towards their work for personal development and a ready-made group of friends and colleagues, but far too young for "pipe and slippers", flower arranging in the village hall and a life on the golf course. If Google identifies you as retired, you can probably look forward to a daily diet of online ads centring on stair-lifts, Saga cruises and if you are particularly unfortunate incontinence pads! These things just aren't relevant to the vast majority in this demographic grouping.

Secondly, people in the early stages of retirement are frequently searching for what psychologists call "flow" (even if they have no idea what that word means in this context). The best way to understand "flow" is to think back to your childhood, typically around age eight; quite likely you had a passion, something that you could absolutely immerse yourself in, and which you could "lose hours" doing. Maybe it was playing with a trainset, or building dens, or dance or football or.... When you were in that activity, you were happy and time passed without you realising it. You were in "flow". It has been demonstrated that people who can rediscover "flow" in retirement have a higher probability of an enjoyable and healthy retirement. This doesn't necessarily mean going back to trainsets, it most likely means discovering a new "flow" activity.

Our solution?

We are working to make “Boom” the online resource for people in their 50s and 60s who are the antithesis of “OK Boomer”. A place to discover really interesting activities that may be of interest to people in this demographic, but are very unlikely to be aimed at “retired people”. Some suggestions push the boundaries of what you’ll feel comfortable doing (a good thing surely?), some are physically quite demanding (just think of the satisfaction afterwards!), and hopefully almost all of them are “non-obvious”, things that most people were probably unaware of.

We are constantly on the lookout for new ideas. Although we are UK centric at the moment, and therefore most activities are UK based, we are increasingly on the looking for interesting things worldwide.

Some examples

A gap year on the canals – Have you ever thought, wouldn’t it be great to live life at “canal narrowboat pace”, reading books, sipping an evening wine with your fellow travellers and exploring new parts of the UK? More than a week or two’s holiday but selling up and permanently moving onto a canal boat is just a few steps too far? Well, you can do it. There are places where you can negotiate several months living and cruising on a narrowboat, rented.

Then write your book – Armed with all of your new experiences, and the characters that you met on the canals, you’ll probably want to write a book about it. But you’ve never written anything longer than a two-page report. Well in that case you might want to join a week-long “Starting to Write” course in a secluded location, with plenty of access to established authors who can help you to start getting your book out onto paper.

Study at Oxford or Cambridge Universities – It doesn’t matter whether you went to university “first time around” or what your academic background looks like, if you have an interest in a particular subject then both Oxford and Cambridge Universities have very well established



Tim Latham

short courses on a wide variety of subjects, normally with no entry requirements. History of art? Lewis Carroll? The British Monarchy since 1901?

What Next? – If you are around retirement, interested in discovering really interesting activities, and really not that excited reading about those things that much of the market keeps pumping in your direction (information about annuities, stairlifts or purchasing a “retirement living” flat), then please take a look at “Boom” (boom.org.uk) and if it looks interesting then please tell your friends.

Tim Latham

Tim is the founder of Boom (boom.org.uk), before that he was a management consultant with PricewaterhouseCoopers, before that a marketer with Shell (UK) and in the dim and distant past an RAF officer. **PL**

Life after retirement

Sian King

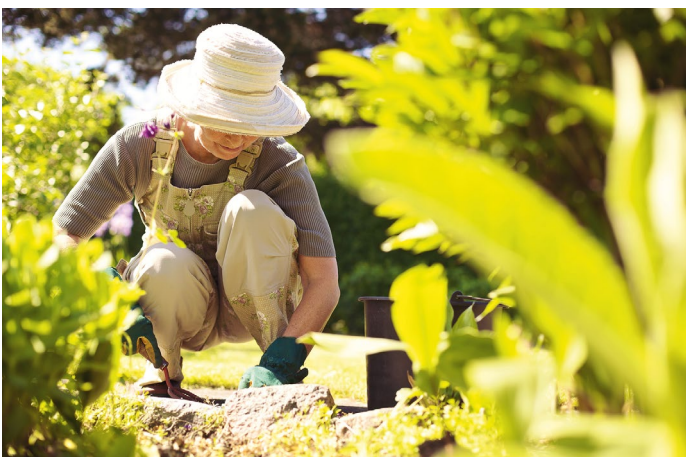
LIFE after retirement can be challenging (or difficult, as we used to say). Each person's experience is unique, and thus there is endless variety in retirement scenarios. Some embrace retirement eagerly, after many years of a full-time demanding, and sometimes exhausting, job. Others, like me, find that the end of a professional career results in a vacuum, devoid of status and responsibilities. In his book *The Psychology of Retirement*, Derek Milne (a clinical psychologist) outlines a number of 'proven psychological coping strategies' for adapting to retirement i.e. making the transition from work to a 'new beginning in life'. He concludes that the most 'successful' formula is a semi-retirement, where work is slowly reduced (i.e. going part-time) and then, perhaps, a flexible consultancy, or a continuation of research, writing etc. Others really never retire, for example running a small business, or working creatively such as artists. But this article is about the retirement of information professionals, most of whom, like me, have had long professional careers which suddenly stop.

In brief, here is my personal experience of retiring five years ago from a fulfilling full-time job. I had to move away from London (owing to personal circumstances), and also learn to live with my husband, also retired, around the house all day. Needing to get out and keep



active, I have tried out a variety of different types of voluntary work, constrained by the limited opportunities in south Wales and my inclinations. I have been a Further Education College governor for three years, worked in the local county Archives (for one day/week) and then local museum where I am still spending two half days per week cataloguing photographs, sorting out their book collection and transcribing display label for Roman artefacts. Another half-day is spent cataloguing books for the Newport Medieval Ship project, for which I was also a trustee. This has been interesting, as I was given £1,000 to buy equipment, find a suitable software package and then set up a "library". I still have several thousand volumes to get through!

Like many retirees, I fill some of my time with walking, gardening, holidaying, grand-child minding, attending the odd lecture and other 'leisure' pursuits, many of which I don't find very fulfilling. I also run a website and newsletter (with my husband in this case) for my local church, and am on a planning group for building a new Community Centre in our village. I tried U3A, but it was not right for me. In the last year, I have taken the Chair role for the Retired Professionals Group, which has brought me close to CILIP, and other profes-



sionals, both retired and active. I am also continuing my role as a CILIP Chartership Mentor (started in 2005), and have had three mentees in south Wales since retiring.

Having described all this, easily the most important vacuum-filler in my post-librarian life has been registering for a part-time Ph.D. which, in my case, followed an earlier M.A. in the History of the Book. Now in my fifth year (part-time), this has required regular visits to local archives, university libraries, the National Library of Wales and even two country house collections, as well as considerable amounts of computer research and, of course, writing



National Library of Wales.

Photo by Ian Capper, CC BY-SA 2.0, wikimedia.org

the thesis. I am fortunate in having a very supportive supervisor, and have thoroughly enjoyed the whole process. **PL**

● EVENTS! ● ANNOUNCEMENTS! ● BYGONES!

Retired Professionals Group Annual Lunch 2020

Venue: The Civil Service Club,
Old Scotland Yard, London SW1A 2HJ

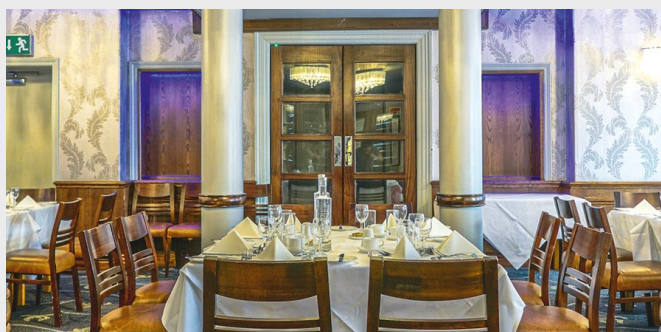
Date: Tuesday, 7th April 2020

Time: 12.30 for 1pm – **Cost:** £40

For more details contact Ian Orton:

email ianorton5@gmail.com

phone **07841 577991**



RPG Annual Lunch 2020 – A time to enjoy nice food, drinks and catch up with friends and colleagues. Don't miss this ever popular get together in a relaxed setting.

Contribute

If you would like to contribute articles and pictures for the next edition, or future editions, of *Post-Lib* please contact the editor at christieikeogu@gmail.com or phone **07957 726 215**.



Book review

Title: *Hope for an Aching Heart: Uplifting Devotions for Widows*

Author: **Margaret Nyman**

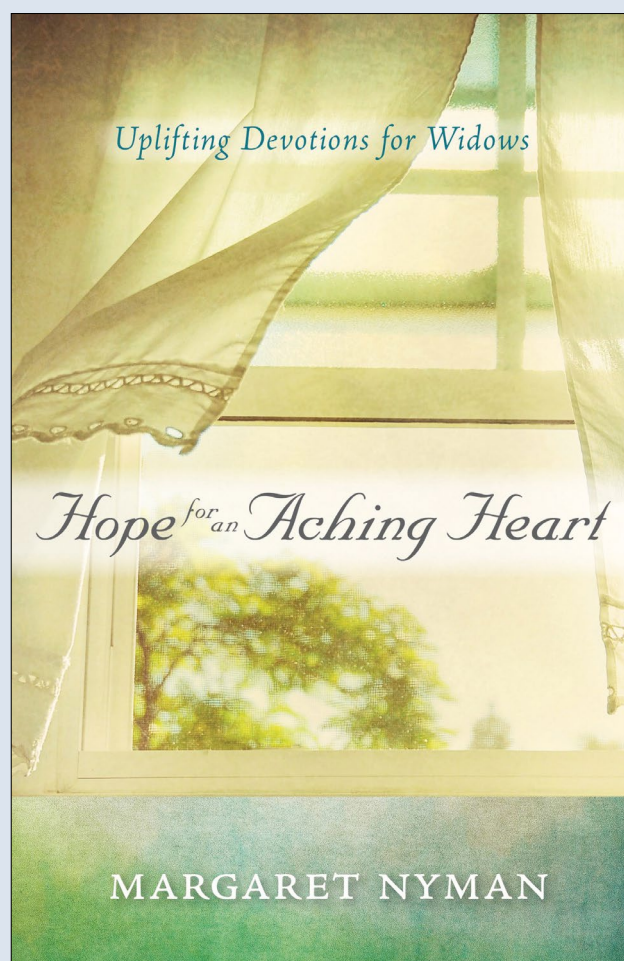
Publisher: Discovery House, 2019
208 pp. ISBN: 978 1 5729 3568 6. £9.99

Review

Death of a partner is an inevitable part of life but until one actually lives through it, will the concept of loss actually become clearer.

In the *Hope for an Aching Heart*, Margaret Nyman reveals what most bereaved individuals go through but lack the opportunity to share their feelings as widely as she has done. Although the book is about her personal experience and of particular inference to widows, several elements of her ordeal seem common in every loss.

It is a devotional book, divided into six parts, making it so easy to read and share with like-minded friends and families. Each part covers a specific aspect of problems that loss and bereavement bring, such as the disbelief that one has actually become a widow/widower; seeing one's self in sudden tears; learning to adjust to life without the partner; and finding one's way through the singleness maze. As I was reading this book, I met a lady who just lost her husband. After sharing some time with her, I could not help giving her my copy as I felt she needed it more than I do. Those of us who are Christians would also appreciate the Bible quotations which open up the mind to remembering that God has been present in every conversation about our lives here on earth, and will remain with us as we pass through the difficulty of dealing with our loss.



There is an-not-alone type of feeling you have as you begin to digest what Margaret shares, and as you reflect on the past and the meaning of life in general. She was married for forty years and a mother of seven children. Apparently, she is a keen blogger with thousands of followers. As stated, 'Out of her desire to respond to their cries and help other widows, she penned this inspiring devotional'.

Hope for an Aching Heart is a highly readable book and in large print. I recommend it to anyone bereaved as well as people in the field of counselling and pastoral work.

Christiana Ikeogu