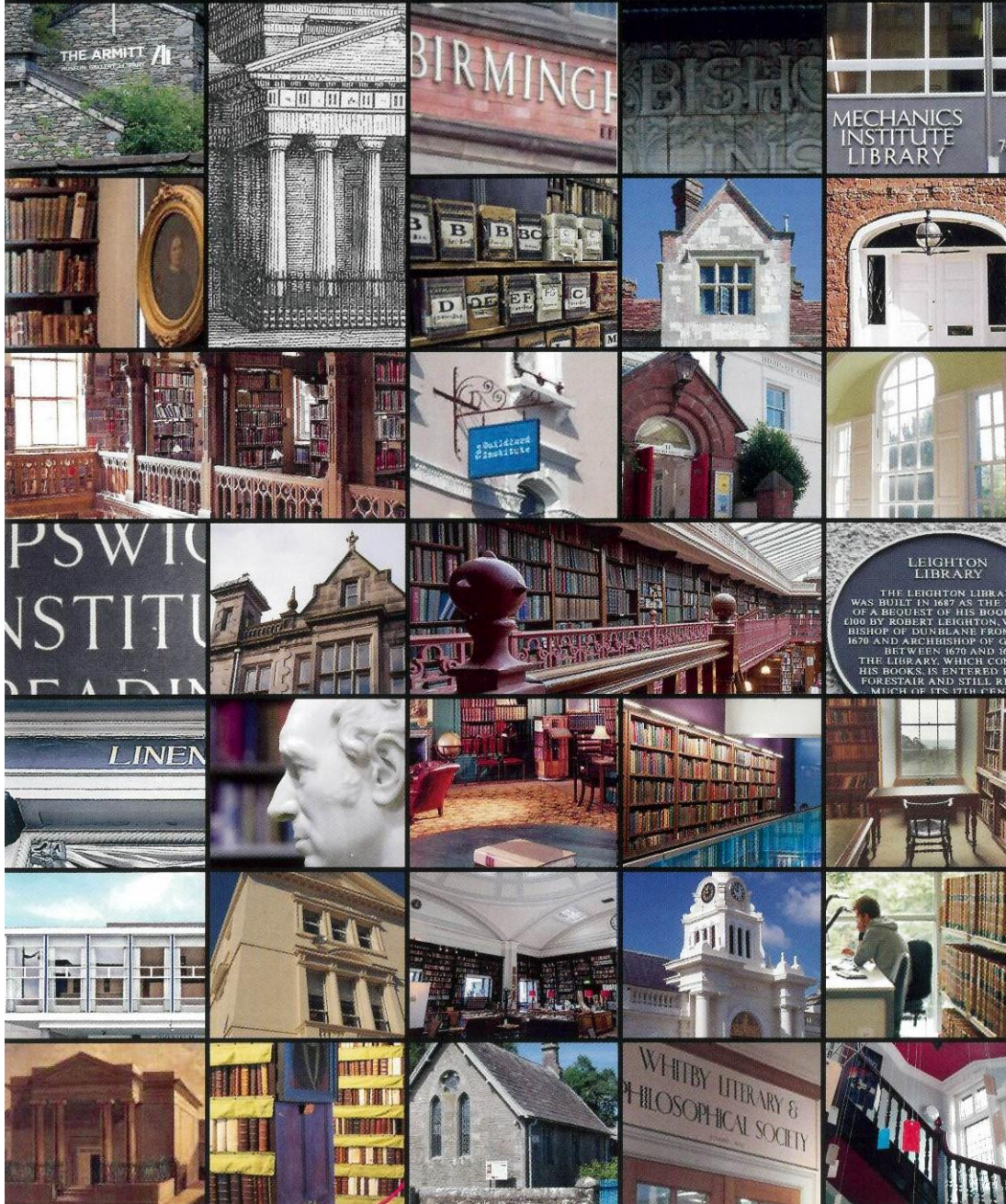




INDEPENDENT LIBRARIES ASSOCIATION



ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS 2021~2022

ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT LIBRARIES

ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

PRESIDENT

Neil Pearson

OFFICERS & COMMITTEE

Officers

The following officers served during the last year:

- Emma Marigliano, Chairwoman
- Kay Easson, Secretary (Newcastle Lit & Phil)
- Paul Ranford, Treasurer

Committee Members

The following served on the Committee 2021-2022

Lisa di Tommaso, (The Morrab Library)

- Melanie Duffill-Jeffs (Bromley House, Nottingham)
- Thom Keep (The Portico Library)
- Louisa Yates (Gladstone's Library)
- Serena Trowbridge (Birmingham and Midland Institute)
- Philip Marshall (The London Library)
- Emma Laws (Devon & Exeter Institution) (to January 2022)
- Tom Corrick (Oxford Union Library)

CHAIRWOMAN'S MESSAGE

Each year Kay Easson and I work hard to put the Annual Report together. She gathers all the contributions and sends out gentle reminders to the Libraries to let us have their contributions. Then she sends them over to me to juggle them about and make them 'look good'. I pester people for photos that relate to some of the information that we get on the individual libraries, but find that I still do a bit of a trawl through websites and image searches to project the work that the libraries have doing over the past year. While I work through the report, moving this over here and that over there, I'm also reading about the libraries' achievements during the year. I have to say that I'm always so impressed at the breadth of activity each library demonstrates in their contribution. For all that the experience handed down over the centuries, these past two years have been felt by the people that are here now and it's been a once in a life-time experience. But it was all hands to the pumps and, from what all the contributions here indicate, our libraries seem to have come back stronger than ever. Expansion, digitisation, cataloguing, outreach projects and more – including some hip-hop (see the London Library report!) – have all been on the cards this past year and collaboration between the libraries – much of it initiated online – has increased apace. I think as you read through this Report

you will be proud, as I am, to be involved in an Association that brings all our independent libraries together in this way, with more collaborative ventures, seminars, workshops, town hall meetings and courses to help staff, volunteers and trustees to understand their collections better. What's more, we're growing! We've been delighted to welcome four new libraries since April 2021. The Powysland Library in Welshpool, The Centre for Elective Home Education Research and Repository, based in Tiverton, Dr Williams Library in London, and most recently the Library of the Marylebone Cricket Club at Lords. Three very well-established libraries and one most representative of the 21st century as Home Education continues to make its mark ever more widely – All the result of a recruitment drive headed by our President, Neil Pearson, and we certainly consider ourselves lucky to have such a great ambassador for the Association. To paraphrase what he said, recently, we will aim for our own half century to increase the membership from the current 40 libraries we are proud to count as members of the ILA!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As President of the Independent Libraries Association it's my pleasure and privilege to write a few words of introduction to the Association's Annual Report for 2022. It's doubly pleasurable to do so this year, with the stress and upheaval caused by Covid-related closures and lockdowns now seemingly behind us. Through all that time our librarians and their staff coped brilliantly with the challenges and difficulties thrown up by the pandemic, showing great resilience and inventiveness to keeping core services going. With the lifting of lockdown regulations last July, they could at last go back to doing what they like doing best: providing a full range of services to our libraries' members, welcoming them back to fully open buildings — and planning for the future. As you'll see from this Report, the ILA has the future very much in mind. Firstly, we're swelling our ranks: I'm delighted to welcome four new libraries to ILA membership: Centre for Elective Home Education Research and Repository in Exeter, the MCC Library, based at Lord's Cricket Ground; the Powysland Club Library in Montgomeryshire, Wales; and Doctor Williams's Library in Gordon Square, London. A warm welcome to you all. We now have forty ILA member libraries: I'd very much like to bring up the half century before too long.... Secondly, a number of exciting initiatives by member libraries are now moving forward. The Devon and Exeter Institution has secured £814,000 in National Lottery funding for the second stage of its Next Chapter project, a three-year development plan to improve facilities, support conservation work and upgrade its activities programmes. And Dunblane's beautiful Leighton Library continues to raise funds for its building's Restoration Appeal: a donation of £30,000 from The Pilgrim Trust in December means they are now over 30% of the way to their £500,000 target. Our thanks to The Pilgrim Trust — and please do visit the Leighton Library website, and get involved if you can. Finally, this 2022 ILA Annual Conference on 13-14 May at the Birmingham and Midland Institute has the future very much in mind. This year's theme — 'Spreading the Word about the Independent Library' — encourages us to look outwards and forwards. It's been difficult to do recently; it's thrilling to be able to do it now.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2021-2022

These meetings were held via Zoom on 29 April, 26 July, 29 October 2021, and 28 January 2022. In person meetings are due to recommence in the summer of 2022.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2021

This was hosted by The Leeds Library over Friday 24th and Saturday 25th September 2021, having been postponed from June 2020 due to global pandemic restrictions in force throughout that year and much of the next.

The theme, The Great Good Place, highlighted how the libraries had become a base for relaxation, sociability, debate, even work – but also reading and research. And amongst this, lively programmes of events and exhibitions, outreach, community collaborations ensured an ever-growing relevance to the communities around them alongside the regular subscribers.

This was also the first occasion on which the ILA, through the expert and friendly help of The Leeds Library staff, brought the conference and the AGM to a wider audience by delivering a hybrid event – online and in person, allowing papers to be presented by colleagues in New York, Northern Ireland and Devon. We met old friends and welcomed new ones to the occasion and with only the very slightest hitch with the Wi-Fi signal, the Conference was a great success.

MEMBERSHIP

At 31 March 2022, Membership of the Association currently stood at 40 institutions and 15 individual supporters.

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

The cash account for the financial year to 31 March 2022 is appended to this Report on page 6.

The Association generated a net cash surplus £1,534.91 for the year, compared to a deficit of £744.32 in the previous year. The improvement arose mainly from the return to subscription payment of several member libraries who, because of financial hardship caused by the COVID pandemic, had opted out of subscription payments for 2020-21 under arrangements agreed by the Committee and allowed under the Association's Constitution.

That said, several member libraries had not, by 31st March, quite returned to normal operations and some paid subscriptions remained outstanding at that date; these are now being collected.

Committee meetings continued to be held via Zoom, eliminating their cost and associated travel and subsistence. It is expected that face-to-face meetings will resume in 2022.

The postponed AGM and Annual Conference – originally planned to be held at the Leeds Library in 2020 – were held in September 2021.

The balance in the Association's bank account at the end of the financial year was £11,832.17.

Independent Libraries Association

Financial Report - cash account

	1 Apr 2021 to Period: 31 Mar 2022	1 Apr 2020 to 31 Mar 2021
Income		
Subscriptions - Libraries	1,350.00	1,140.00
Subscriptions - Individuals	140.00	90.00
Donations - Individuals	240.00	270.00
PressReader contributions	200.00	600.00
Annual Conference and AGM	765.00	
Total Income	2,695.00	2,100.00
Expenditure		
PressReader		2,250.00
ZOOM subscription (1 year)	143.88	143.88
Annual Conference & AGM	628.75	
Meetings		
Website	342.51	450.44
Photocopying, postage	8.95	
Travel Expenses		
Other costs	36.00	
Total Expenditure	1,160.09	2,844.32
Surplus/(deficit) for the period	1,534.91	(744.32)
Bank account balances:		
At beginning of period	10,297.26	11,041.58
Add/(less) Surplus/Deficit for the period	1,534.91	(744.32)
Closing balance	11,832.17	10,297.26

Prepared by: Paul Ranford FCA

Paul Ranford FCA

**Draft minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Independent Libraries Association
held at the Leeds Library on Friday 24th September 2021 and via Zoom**

Present ***In Person:*** Emma Marigliano (in the chair), Neil Pearson, (President), Carl Hutton (The Leeds Library), Thom Keep (The Portico Library), Carrie de Silva (Sybil Campbell Library), Lisa di Tommaso (The Morrab Library), Joe Fenn (The Portico Library), Margaret Mackay (Highgate Literary & Scientific Institution), Jo Rooks (The Ipswich Institute), Samantha McCombe (The Linen Hall Library), Anja Thompson-Rohde (Bromley House Library), Louisa Yates (Gladstone's Library), ,

Via Zoom: Kay Easson (Hon. Secretary/Newcastle Lit & Phil), Paul Ranford (Hon. Treasurer), Matthew Brooke (The London Library), Katie Childs (Chawton House), Clare Eacott (Sybil Campbell Library), Emma Laws (The Devon & Exeter Institution), Thomas Pink (Highgate Literary & Scientific Institution), Michelle Ravenscroft,

1. Apologies for absence

These were received from Tom Corrick (Oxford Union Library), Nicola Davies (The Royal Philatelic Society), Melanie Duffill-Jeffs (Bromley House Library)

2. Chairwoman's Opening Remarks

These were deferred to the opening of the conference on 25th September.

3. President's Opening Remarks

As above

4. Minutes of the AGM held online on 7th November 2020.

These were taken as read, their acceptance proposed by Thom Keep and seconded by Carl Hutton.

5. Matters arising from the minutes: there were none.

6. Annual Report 2020-2021

The Chairwoman thanked the Hon. Secretary for compiling this and thanked all the contributors. The Report provided a great window into the activities of member institutions. She entreated libraries to continue to contribute in the future as this was a great way of encouraging others to join the Association. It showed the way in which the ILA members had continued to be active during the pandemic and how supportive it could be.

Thom Keep complimented the Chairwoman on the images used in the Report.

The Report was adopted, proposed by Lisa di Tommaso and seconded by Thom Keep.

7. Financial Report & Accounts for 2020-2021

The Treasurer, Paul Ranford, reported a cash deficit of £744 for the year, but he assured the meeting that the Association's accounts were sound, and that there was a closing balance of £10,333. The Committee had continued to meet via Zoom, with a subscription for this service costing c.£123 and, therefore, travelling expenses had not been incurred. He continued by reporting that the Committee had discussed subscriptions for the period April 2020 and March 2021 and had decided to give institutions the opportunity to opt out if the incursions

into finances made more difficult by the pandemic would be too negative. Most, however, had continued to pay subscriptions. The main expense of the year had been the subscription to Press Reader which the Association had subsidised. Financially the ILA continued to be in good shape, with the current bank balance amounting to over £12,000.

Approval of the accounts was proposed by Thom Keep and seconded by Carl Hutton.

8. Election of Officers and Committee 2021-2022

Those standing for election were approved.

The Chairwoman noted that three co-options were possible and encouraged people to come forward, particularly from smaller libraries.

9. Subscriptions 2021-2022

The Chairwoman Reported that the Committee had agreed that these should be kept at the current rates, particularly given the nationwide economic climate. This was proposed by Louisa Yates and seconded by Lisa di Tommaso.

10. Proposed future Annual Meetings

The Chairwoman was pleased to report that The Birmingham & Midland Institute had indicated that it would like to host the AGM and Conference in 2022, and that the Newcastle Lit & Phil has offered its premises for 2025.

Samantha McCoombe offered the Linen Hall Library for 2023 and, provisionally, the Ipswich Institute or the Morrab Library were offered for 2024

11. Any other Business

Lisa di Tomasso noted how valuable it has been to be able to talk to ILA colleagues and, through the networking opportunities, to seek advice and support throughout the various stages of the pandemic.

The Chairwoman echoed this, noting that independent libraries were so unique and different from public and academic libraries, who had their own facilities for support, that the particular support the ILA offered was invaluable. Concluding the meeting she said that ILA libraries provided a network that could be depended on to help colleagues in different ways, often working in relative isolation.

LdiT also commented on the written and spoken appreciation expressed by her Library's members – who underpinned the vital role filled by library's everywhere, but independent libraries in particular who have historically fended for themselves and, although innovation and resilience has been the key factor in survival, without the support of their members the task of keeping open and keeping going would have been made so much more difficult. She concluded that the many letters, notes and cards of appreciation have been saved and will be part of the library's history. All in attendance were concurred entirely with these sentiments.

No other business being brought to the meeting the Chairwoman thanked all for their attendance and declared the Annual General Meeting closed, after which she presented, on behalf of the Association, heartfelt thanks with small gifts of appreciation to the hosts at The Leeds Library and to the Conference Team.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS 2021



Good morning, everyone. My name is Neil Pearson, I'm the President of the Independent Libraries Association, and I'm delighted to welcome you all, in person and online, to the second day of this year's ILA Conference: *Libraries as The Great Good Place*. It's good to be here. I hope you'll all take it in the right spirit when I say it's good to be anywhere. That we're here at all is down to the frankly heroic efforts of everyone here at the Leeds Library, who began organising this event in the depths of lockdown, with precious little hope of the event ever seeing the light of day, and with nothing but blind faith to keep them moving forward. The entire team here, led by Carl Hutton, Fiona Gell, Molly Magrath and Sarah West, deserve not only our profound thanks and admiration, but our awestruck wonder. Very many thanks and congratulations to you all. The theme of this year's conference is Libraries as The Great Good Place. That title references a book of the same name by the American sociologist Ray Oldenburg. In that book, published in 1989, Oldenburg argues the crucial importance of 'third places', the first two places being home and the workplace. Third places are those places where both friends and strangers gather, places where (in Oldenburg's phrase) 'unrelated people relate', where new relationships begin, where old ones reinforce themselves, where a sense of belonging is fostered, and where the pulse and health of the wider community can be measured every day. Oldenburg cites the rural churches, drug stores and post offices of the United States as examples of such places in his homeland, but bemoans his country's lack of the distinctive informal gathering places of Europe, places that grew organically as part of the countries themselves: the coffee houses of Austria, the cafés of France, the fora of classical Rome — and, of course, the pubs of Britain where you can not only forget the cares and woes of the first two places but, if you devote enough time and work at it hard enough, you can actually forget where those places are. All third places, Oldenburg argues, perform a great service for us on both a personal and social level: third places encourage participation, and discussion, and the resolution of problems. The interaction we find there encourages us to develop our ability to see and understand the world through the eyes of others, to be less dogmatic when defending our own point of view, to understand that it's possible for well-

meaning people to disagree, that it's possible that other people have thought of something you haven't, and that hearing that something will sometimes cause a beneficial shift in you. All of this, Oldenburg argues, contributes to the greater, communal good, while at the same time bringing a sense of fulfilment, contentment and growth to the individual. And all of that, I'm sure we would all agree, describes perfectly one of the many roles libraries play in our communities. So imagine my surprise when Oldenburg begins Chapter 11 of his book with this: 'Like all living things, the third place is vulnerable to its environment. [...] Unlike hospitals or libraries, which have exacting, complicated, and expensive internal requirements, third places are typically modest, inexpensive and small by comparison.' Oldenburg, there, specifically excluding libraries from his definition of third places. Forget everything I said about understanding the world through the eyes of others, forget everything I said about being less dogmatic about one's own point of view. Oldenburg's clearly an idiot. The moment he specifically excluded libraries from his approved list of third places, I went right off him. For my money, libraries fit perfectly into the third-place paradigm. While libraries are places where actual talking does tend to be frowned on, the sort of beneficial third-place interactions Oldenburg describes are taking place in them all the time. A teacher once described reading to me as 'conversations with people who can't be there in person', and those silent conversations — challenging, illuminating, questioning, entertaining — embed themselves in us over the course of a reading life, coalescing to form in us a world view that is uniquely our own. We get that in all the third places Oldenburg describes, of course, but we get it in libraries too — and possibly in a more concentrated form. To Henry James, the third place was something else again. The title of Oldenburg's book is taken from a late James short story called *The Great Good Place*, which was first published in 1900. George Dane is a middle-aged, very successful, very famous man of letters — just like, oh I don't know, Henry James — but for all his money, fame and success, Dane is unhappy. He's unhappy because by the time he's spent the day doing everything he has to, to ensure that he continues to be famous and successful, he has no time or energy left to do any of the things that would actually give him pleasure. One morning a visitor he's forgotten he'd invited, a struggling writer whose name he can't remember, arrives for a meeting at breakfast (Dane is successful and perpetually busy, and his working day finishes late and starts early). It's clear the visitor, unknown and unnoticed by the world, covets Dane's life; but it's also clear the feeling is mutual, complete obscurity being as attractive a prospect to Dane, as Dane's hectic success is to the visitor. Suddenly, in a change of setting we can't quite grasp and which may or may not be real, Dane gets his wish. He finds himself in some kind of semi-celestial country retreat where time is elastic and elusive, where he finds himself freed of all appointments and commitments and expectations, and where he is at last able to get back to the essence of himself he has been trying to regain, unsuccessfully, for so long. As it turns out, he's still unsuccessful: the story ends with his morning visitor waking him, and telling him he fell asleep on his couch eight hours ago. For James, then, the great good place was not a physical location but a state of mind, and while we may not be able to live there we can at least glimpse it, be brought closer to it, by bricks-and-mortar buildings which encourage us to set off on that expedition. Buildings like this one. It's one of the many reasons that it's so good to be back spending time in these buildings. While it would be stretching a point, rather, to describe Zoom as a great good place, over the last eighteen

months or so it has certainly felt like one, playing its part in keeping the ILA's member librarians communicating, functioning, and above all sane. I paid tribute to our staff at ILA libraries in my message which is attached to this year's annual report, but I'd like to repeat some of that tribute here, because it can't be said often enough. Covid compelled us all to make fundamental changes to the way we live, and work, and interact with each other. Those changes were deep and difficult. ILA librarians' response to those changes was absolutely extraordinary. As soon as lockdown made visits to libraries — to anywhere — impossible, ILA-on-Zoom began to thrum. Members came together virtually to share ideas on how best to continue to provide core services to our subscribers; how best to keep them informed; and how best to prevent those with limited connectivity from becoming isolated, not just from their library but from communal life in general. And while the Zoom meetings of the past year have always, understandably, been primarily concerned with meeting the immediate challenges posed by the pandemic, participants in them seem never to have felt either defined or diminished by coronavirus: at no time in the last eighteen months has Covid been allowed to sideline the ILA's plans for its future. (It's worth noting that we managed to pick up two new member libraries during the Covid period, taking our total membership from 36 libraries to 38. A warm welcome to the Powysland Club Library in Welshpool, and the Dr. Williams Library in Gordon Square, London.) At a time when everyone could have been forgiven for turning inward a little, ILA librarians turned out towards the communities they serve, and continued to serve them. Postal book loan services, digital provision of libraries' newspaper and magazine subscriptions — even safely-distanced pastoral visits to subscribers' doorsteps. Those Zoom meetings, both those with formal agendas and those without, did a lot more than help members keep their core services running, important though that was. The mutual support those regular online meetings fostered seemed to enable people to keep moving forward, at a time when one could have been forgiven for throwing in the towel. Planning for the future turned out to be a very good way to cope with the rigours of the present, and my thanks and admiration go out to everyone who contributed so much to helping each other through. The first day of our Conference yesterday was an outstanding success — outstanding and trailblazing, in that for the first time in ILA Conference history papers were given remotely by overseas speakers, Christine Zarett and Regina Bernard from New York. (Thank you once again, Zoom). Today, as well as the keynote address coming very shortly from Peter Francis of Gladstone's Library, we can look forward to no fewer than ten papers given by scholars and librarians representing member libraries from Bradford to Penzance. Times have been tough, but the ILA is tougher. My thanks once again to everyone at The Leeds Library: as good places go, this is a great one. Many thanks for listening, and enjoy the second day of your Conference.

MEMBERS' REPORTS 2021-2022

Reports were received from the following Member libraries:

THE BIRMINGHAM AND MIDLAND INSTITUTE

The Birmingham and Midland Institute Library has been open all through the last year. We have had fewer members visit than usual, but we have welcomed more visitors and day members. Day membership has been a useful addition to our range of memberships as it has led to a small income stream. We have had some volunteers leave us; one found employment at one of the local municipal libraries thanks to the work she did here with us. Others have moved away, or not returned yet because of concerns about public transport post-COVID. We have welcomed new volunteers, and are now staffed every day, with some volunteers working on archiving and preventative preservation rather than library tasks. We are continuing to audit the books we have in the Library; we started this pre-COVID, and now have a number of volunteers checking the books. A previous audit was undertaken, but we do not know when it happened as there are no dates on the records. We are remedying this one book at a time.

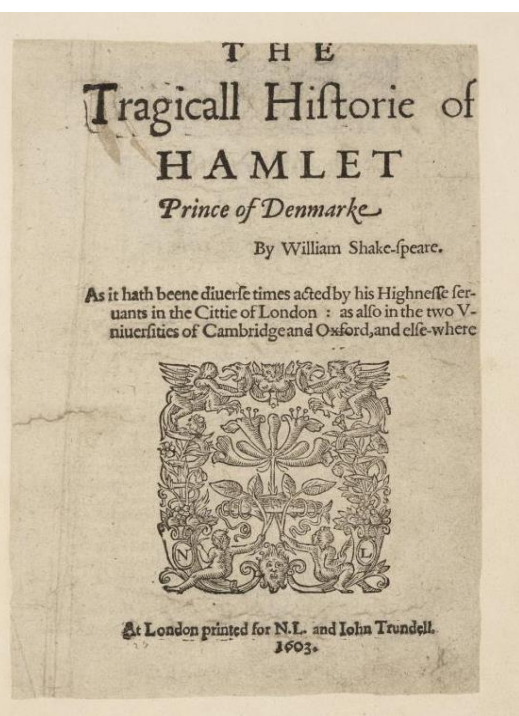
Our bookshop has had to be closed for the moment as we had donations of thousands of books after the first lockdown, and we do not have room for them all. We are rehoming them via local, national, and international charities so that no book goes into landfill. We do have a few select items for sale in reception, but will have relocate and specialise when we reopen after the Transformation Project. The sale of a little-used part of the building is moving very slowly, but when this goes through there will be works in the building and a new entrance created for the library and we will be able to move forward more swiftly with proposed projects.

We continue with online activities; Bookish Club has proved to be very popular with a dedicated group of frequent fliers and the occasional visitor. The BMI continues to host online lectures, which will move to face to face from September.

As we have been moving books around the building in preparation for the Transformation Project, which we hope will be starting soon, we have made some remarkable discoveries of books that have been kept in quite the wrong place, including two copies of Hamlet printed in 1603 and 1604, before Shakespeare's death. These have now been returned to secure places.

We have had a number of researchers, some inspired through the ravages of COVID and some by *Peaky Blinders*, so we are kept on our toes with the access to information that we hold in our archives. The creation of an online catalogue remains our ultimate aim, but at the moment it is not possible to move forward with this.

Samina Sadia, Hon Librarian



Title page of what may be the earliest printing of Shakespeare's Hamlet

DEVON & EXETER INSTITUTION

We have been fully open for one year, following the pandemic. Although we continue to feel its effects both financially and operationally, in many ways we have emerged stronger, more enterprising and resilient.

The Next Chapter project

We are delighted to share that our endeavours through three lockdowns were fruitful, and we have secured Round Two funding of £814,000 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, which, with the grant awarded last year, is a total project grant of £1m.

We have welcomed three new members of staff, including Librarian, Sonia Llewellyn, Collections and Research Assistant, Bethany Howell, and Project Officer, Karen Cunningham. We continue to work with Emma Laws as a specialist consultant and in partnership, in her new role as Cathedral Librarian.

Our project will take place over the next two years and in that time, we will be:

- creating an enhanced 'welcome area', making the building fully accessible for the first time and upgrading facilities, including lavatories, heating and Wi-Fi
- opening-up the Institution's front rooms and renovating the garden spaces for reading and events
- offering an enhanced programme of activities, including events for Exeter UNESCO City of Literature
- delivering essential conservation work, a collection review, and the development of a long-term research strategy.

We are intending to remain open throughout development.

Library news

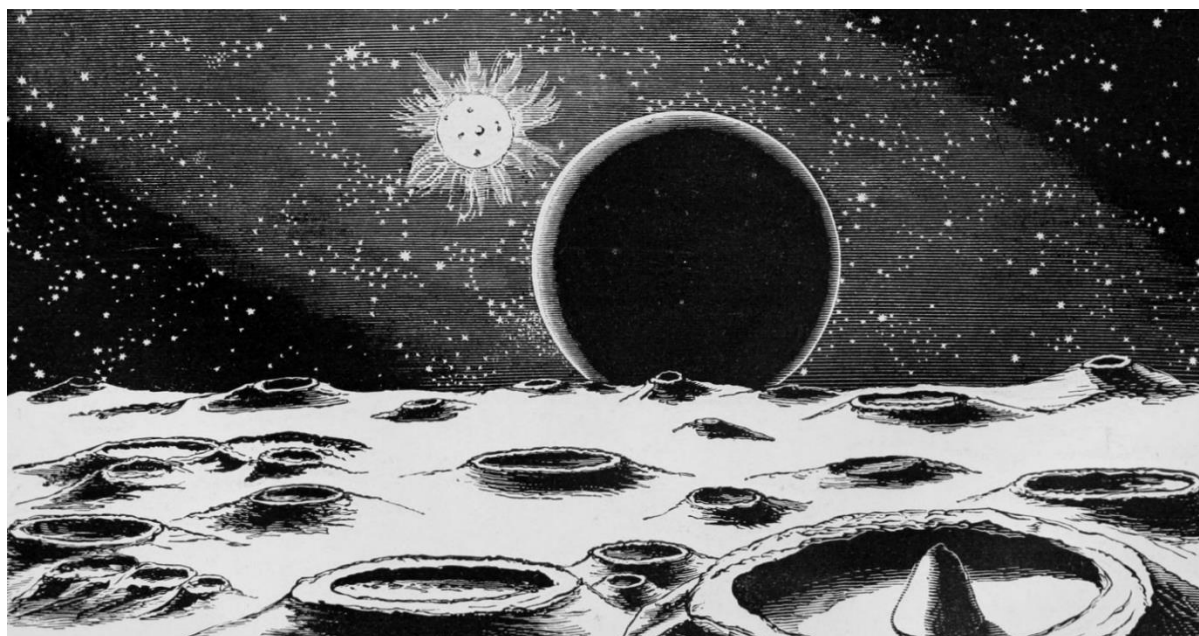
We introduced a bookable research service in the Inner Library as part of our COVID response and we will continue to operate a bookable service going forward. Research appointments mean our members and visitors are guaranteed a reserved seat in the Inner Library and staff can consult with members about their research interests and suggest relevant items from the collection. This also helps us to ensure that books are handled with care and returned to their original positions.

In November last year we became a member library of JISC. Our book collections are now searchable on JISC Library Hub Discover – a searchable web interface which brings together the collections of research libraries across the UK. This means that people all over the world can discover the DEI and our collections.

We are especially delighted to report the return of the long-term loan of the library's collection of early classics and modern language literature, which was transferred to the University of Exeter in the 1970s and then formally loaned to the University in 2008. This collection dates from the 16th century and includes many books listed in the earliest catalogue published in 1816. This year also saw the purchase of George Thompson's *Travels and adventures in Southern Africa*, which was originally

presented to the DEI in 1830 and later deaccessioned. This now sits once again in its rightful place within our Voyages and Travel section.

As part of our conservation fundraising, members of the public are able to 'adopt-a-book'. Money raised through this programme feeds directly into caring for our collections, ensuring they are accessible to future generations. The name of the adopter then appears on a bookplate, and they become a part of the history of the DEI.



Popular Science Monthly, Volume 3, October 1873 -The Moon – part of the book display for Well Met by Moonlight

Recent book displays have included 'Well-Met by Moonlight', highlighting early scientific and astronomical works, to tie in with Luke Jerram's Museum of the Moon at Exeter Cathedral, as well as 'A Ballad of Reading' in which we have explored connections to LGBTQ+ histories within our collections.

Our region revealed

At the end of phase one of this, our digitisation project, we have scanned and created inventory records for about 1300 prints and drawings. They are accessible via our online Collections Explorer – there is a link from the library page on our website. In the pilot for our project last year, we sent a selection of artworks to TownsWeb for scanning - during lockdown this year, our digitisation project coordinator, Carol Anderson, continued scanning artworks at the DEI using our new graphic arts scanner funded by the Friends of Devon's Archives. Our volunteers also continued to research artworks at home and create metadata to augment basic inventory records into full descriptive catalogue records that offer more information about the significance of artworks.

In phase two of our project, we are continuing to invite our members and volunteers to participate in the documentation of our collections. Our recent call out for Prints and Drawings volunteers invites interested participants to research and collate information about an area of interest in our illustration collections, and to contribute their findings to our online descriptions. Where possible, digitised materials of particular interest are earmarked as material for education and outreach. In addition to

the 1300 prints and drawings digitised last year, the final sketchbook of Francis Stevens, along with working transcriptions, has been made available online. Our Collections and Research Assistant, Bethany Howell, is also continuing to work on a series of church watercolours and flat portraits. An “illustration of the week” is also made available on our social media channels, to increase opportunities for engagement and interpretation.

Programme update

We focused on outdoor activities last summer, to help promote well-being and recovery in the natural environment and developed a new ‘exterior tour’ of the institution. We encouraged our members to get outside with a book and take in the fresh air with a range of activities, including making terrariums, bird boxes and planters – all inspired by our Natural History collections.

Our ‘Community Culture’ lecture season began in the Autumn, and we welcomed a diverse range of speakers to explore communities in and around the DEI, past, present, and future, beginning with Professor Helen Berry, who spoke on ‘The Curious History of the English Coffee House’ and concluding with Dr Robin Wootton, who spoke on ‘Beginnings and Biology in the DEI; the legacies of William Elford Leach.’

Our Reading Group, Cinema Club and West Quarter Research Group resumed in-person events, and we celebrated Heritage Open Days at the beginning of September, which was themed ‘Edible England’. We offered tours to over 120 people, many of whom had not previously known that we existed; the Saturday team provided edible flowers workshops and the library team presented a display of early cookery books in the Outer Library, co-curated by library volunteers.

We continue to work closely with the University of Exeter, having contributed to several course modules online this year and presented an exhibition and lectures in collaboration with the School of Modern Languages on the theme of German Dreams and Dreamers. We are currently working on a collaborative display entitled Motherhood in Devon funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

And finally ...

we are thrilled to announce that our Research Partner-in-Residence, Dr Ingrid Pollard has been nominated for the Turner Prize.

Her contributions to art over the past 40 years have broken new ground and forged pathways for younger generations, shaping Britain’s understanding and histories of art, society, and culture. During her time at the Institution, Ingrid is using our collections to inspire a new piece of work in response to the histories of Devon and the South West. Her work will be shown at the Institution between 6 August and 29 October 2022.

The Institution team have no doubt that the uplifting role of the arts, culture and literary heritage will enable us to continue to flourish as a community in the coming year.

Emma Dunn, Director

DR WILLIAMS'S TRUST AND LIBRARY

The Trust, and Library, spent the greatest part of the year preparing for a major refurbishment project of their historic Grade II-listed building in the heart of Bloomsbury. Complex planning and reconfiguration of initial proposals were ultimately successful in obtaining full planning permission from Camden Council. However, the rocketing costs of building works, labour and materials has posed a major challenge. The Trust has nonetheless used this as a moment of opportunity to review its purpose and mission and to embark on a renewed spirit of engagement for the library which has heretofore been known only to few. The process of decanting the collections – some 100,000s of books and 100s of paintings and artworks has been slow, delicate, and of course, costly. It is ongoing but, in the meantime, the Library has continued to provide an off-site service to scholars. Material can be called back from storage and there has been a regular demand for digitised research material. A more appropriate cataloguing of the collection has also been initiated to make it compatible with recognised standards.



Removal of paintings for storage

GLADSTONE'S LIBRARY

We didn't submit a report in 2020-21, as the financial impact of Covid-19 meant that Gladstone's Library was closed for a full eighteen-month period. A drastic but necessary financial survival plan meant that the Library took the very sad decision to make redundancies, and the original team was reduced to five members of staff. This team oversaw much-needed renovations, kept up the Library's social media and managed the re-opening plans. An unexpected high point was the huge public response to our 'Sponsor a Shelf' fundraising scheme; over 1,000 people from all around the world sponsored a shelf in our Reading Rooms for £100. These funds were a lifeline during our closure, and

sincere thanks are due to Helen Francis for the initial idea, Annette Lewis for its implementation, and of course everyone who donated.

After a lengthy recruitment process, the new team re-opened the Library in September 2021. In the Reading Rooms, we're delighted to welcome a new Assistant Librarian, Isobel Goodman, and a new Archivist, Alexandra Foulds. Our very successful Graduate Work Experience programme had to be retired due to renovations to the residential study bedrooms, but we welcome two new Reading Room assistants, Louise Roberts and James Southerby. Our small team is very pleased to say that we're pressing forward on all fronts; other than acquisitions, all our pre-pandemic projects have restarted.

The GWE programme has been diverted into several new volunteering schemes, with conservation and digitization teams already established and going well. We hope that our new 'foundation volunteer' scheme will offer some of the opportunities of the GWE programme for anyone hoping to gain the significant work experience required for admission to a postgraduate degree in GLAM (galleries, libraries, archives, museums).

As I write this the Reading Rooms are bustling. Students revise, poets compose, novelists plot, readers dream and researchers browse the shelves once again. Reader applications are back to their usual high levels, so much so that we've started to wonder where we're going to seat them all. A lovely problem to have, and we're delighted to have them all back with us. Roll on 2023!

Louisa Yates, Director of Collections and Research

HIGHGATE LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTION

Since Margaret Mackay, the previous Librarian, left the Institution to enjoy retirement, it has been a whirlwind for the new Librarian, Tom Pink. There has been so much going on, and there is so much to do that here will be introduced some of the bigger projects that we've been working on:

The library catalogue has been a big focus. We have totally updated the look of the OPAC to bring it in-line with HSLI branding and to make it cleaner and more user-friendly. Adding additional widgets for Twitter and book promotions has also added more elements of interest. Our next step is to allow members to log-in and manage their library accounts online, something that wasn't available previously. We are hoping that this will be rolled-out in the next couple of months.

We have been undertaking a large rationalisation project for all our reserve collections. This has taken, and will continue to take, a vast amount of time but the result so far has been more shelf space which is dearly needed and a more focused collection. This has helped and has itself been shaped by work we have done to review our collection policy.

With a number of withdrawn books being produced from this rationalisation project, we have changed our book disposal partners. We now use Ziffit (World of Books) and Anybooks.biz instead of Revive and have seen an increase in revenue generated for withdrawn books.

In this time we've also held two book sales, classes and lectures have been continuing via Zoom (with some in-person and others to return to the building imminently), gallery exhibitions have returned, we're having our portrait of STC restored, and members are now back in the building. Oh and we had two letters in our archive confirmed to have been written by A. E. Housman by the Housman Society!



New interface of the Institution's Catalogue

Tom Pink, Librarian

THE IPSWICH INSTITUTE

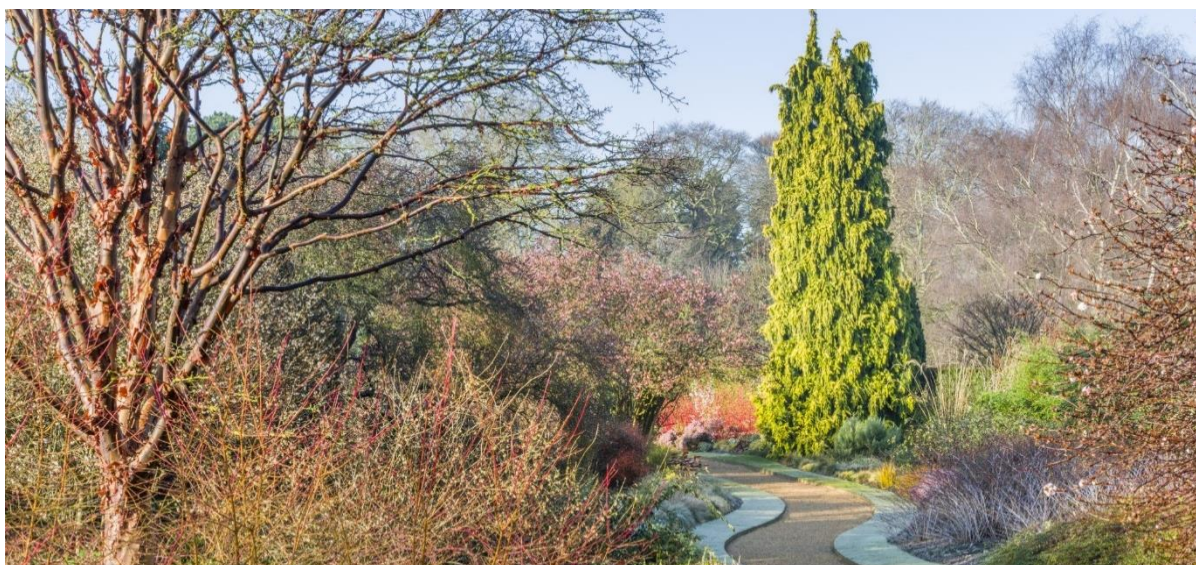
The Ipswich Institute started the year closed, like so many others, due to the third national lockdown a – repeat of 2020! Over the following months we slowly re-opened, first our library, followed by our cafés and finally some talks, courses and activities. During the summer we held some one-off taster sessions of our usual course offer, these gave members the chance to return to the Institute slowly and gain confidence in attending group sessions once again.

The autumn brought the return of our daytime programme with courses in French, Spanish, Italian, Latin, art, music, literature, philosophy, yoga and more. We even managed two coach trips – to Cambridge Botanic Gardens and Christmas at Kew. By the spring of 2022 the Institute had a full offer of daytime and evening courses, talks, Saturday workshops, guided walks and coach trips. After the ups and downs of the previous two years it was a relief to experience some normality again even with some measures such as masks and lateral flow tests still in place.

Work has also now started on the New Angle Prize for literature 2023 after a two year hiatus. The prize was inaugurated in 2009 and is a biennial award for a recently published book of literary merit, associated with or influenced by East Anglia. It aims to celebrate and encourage excellence in the regional literature of East Anglia and is open to recently published work, in print, which may be fiction,

non-fiction or poetry. The award is a partnership between the Ipswich Institute, Suffolk Book League and the University of Suffolk, who hold their own annual prize, the Student New Angle Prize (SNAP), a short story award which any student attending the university can enter. The judges were recently announced as author Sophie Green (author), Keith Jones (chair of the Suffolk Book League) and Liz Trenow (author).

It has been wonderful to finally see the Ipswich Institute slowly coming back to life once more; hearing the Birkbeck Choir practising, ukuleles twanging and philosophical debates mixing in with French grammar.



Cambridge Botanic Garden, Winter Garden – just one of the Ipswich Institute trips

Jo Rooks, General Manager

THE LEEDS LIBRARY

Twelve months ago not many people would have predicted the year of challenges and achievements that the Library would face over the coming year, one that was still punctuated with a Covid lockdown that lasted through to April. The Library used this lockdown period to take on the challenge of having new flooring installed throughout the Library and remove the linoleum flooring that had blighted the aesthetics of the Library for a number of decades.

With the proposal to consider replacing the flooring only being discussed after the final lockdown started, it was to the credit of the Trustees and Staff that by the end of the lockdown period the flooring had been fully replaced.

At the time of this work being completed it was assumed by everyone that the Library would go through a period of consolidation with no further significant projects to be undertaken for the rest of the year due to the uncertainty of the pandemic. This assumption had not factored in the scenario of the building next to the Library (15 Commercial Street) becoming vacant and the owners being willing to sell the property to us. Over a twenty-year period it we had regularly discussed expanding into the building next door with little expectation that it could ever happen. From June 2021 until the completion of the purchase in February 2022 we faced a long period of uncertainty as

to whether our attempt to buy 15 Commercial Street would be successful as negotiations went back and forth. The positive conclusion of those negotiations gives the Library the opportunity to open up and be accessible to all visitors as never before. Securing that building is a tribute to the commitment of the Library Trustees for what will be the most significant development for the Library in over 140 years. The hard work to bring the building to life and raise the funds to enable the building to be fitted out has now begun.



15 Commercial Street with The Leeds Library on the left of Trespass

Besides these two major projects, the Library hosted the Independent Libraries Association (ILA) conference for two days in September and forged new links with many ILA member libraries from across the UK. We were once again part of Leeds Light Night and in the Autumn started to bring events back to the Library as the Covid measures began to ease.

In March of this year the Library also led a partnership to deliver the 4th Leeds Lit Fest which was expanded to cover a nine-day period of events across several venues in the city. The Library programmed and hosted half of the festival programme, with each event being available to online audiences to watch.

During the year, the Library launched its podcast series, continued to extend its online offer and managed to review and implement membership categories that adjusted to the new expectations of the Library created by the pandemic. In a year dominated by two major projects, however, the greatest achievement of the year was the fact that, from the time the Library reopened in April 2021, we remained open for our members each and every day. With a number of staff members part furloughed for a significant proportion of the year, and working in bubbles to ensure that several staff would not need to self-isolate at any one time, keeping the Library open throughout the year was never straightforward and never taken for granted by anyone.

In recent months the Library has expanded its staff team in preparation for taking on the challenge of expanding into 15 Commercial Street and developing a year-round programme of creativity that will open the Library to wider and more diverse audiences.

Carl Hutton, Chief Executive

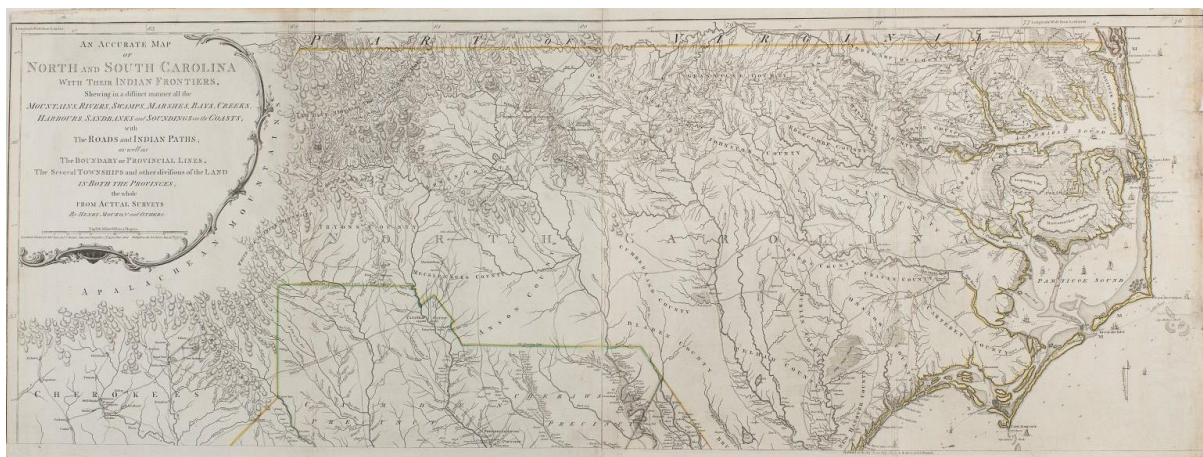
THE LEIGHTON LIBRARY, DUNBLANE

The past year has seen the library take some steps towards return to normal service. The building opened to visitors for the month of August when 441 people visited, which is slightly fewer than in August 2019, the last time the library was open. Nevertheless, it is a welcome return to normality.

In addition, the library's collections have continued to be used beyond the library building. Thanks to a relationship with the University of Stirling, books from the Leighton Library may be consulted at the University Library. This year, book history students were able to see and touch some of the Leighton's books in one of their classes.

The Books and Borrowing research project has also resulted in Leighton borrowing records and other material being consulted, digitised and exhibited at the University.

The University Library has also mounted an exhibition of 18th century American maps from the Leighton Library. In May this year, the exhibition will move to Dunblane Museum.



North and South Carolina, from Leighton Library's American Atlas, on exhibition at University of Stirling, Special Collections

There has been a great deal of effort put into planning and fundraising for the renovation and development of the 17th century library building, with work due to start very soon. To date the Trust has received donations and grants totalling over £172,000 and would like to thank donors and grantors and particularly The Pilgrim Trust and the Swire Charitable Trust. Further details about the restoration are contained on the Trust's website: www.leightonlibrary.org.uk

The Leighton Library also featured in Joe and Mike's Virtual Tour of Scotland! Joe and Mike, two of Scotland's best known Blue Badge Guides, were in Dunblane and included the library in their tour. Take a look: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zy2QsT4f-a8>

Helen Beardsley, Hon Librarian

THE LIBRARY OF INNERPEFFRAY

The Library of Innerpeffray was delighted to be able to re-open to visitors from June 2021 and despite restrictions to visitor numbers had a busy year with tourists visiting Scotland and locals keen to explore. As part of the country-wide celebrations of Walter Scott's 250th birthday the exhibition for the year was 'Read to Death' reflecting the popularity of Scott with Innerpeffray readers and borrowers in the 19th century. 2021 also saw the Library's inaugural Festival of Reading held in September, with the theme of 'the past on the page' featuring a range of local authors, a Reading Aloud evening with music and poetry, children's activities and a Postcard to Reading initiative asking people to share their favourite books.

Lara Haggerty, Library Manager and Keeper of Books

THE LIBRARY OF MISTAKES, EDINBURGH

The Library of Mistakes re-opened to users on Monday 26 April 2021 when the Scottish Government's pandemic restrictions were lifted. We had a steady trickle of readers through the door - mainly researchers and students in search of a quiet space in which to work.

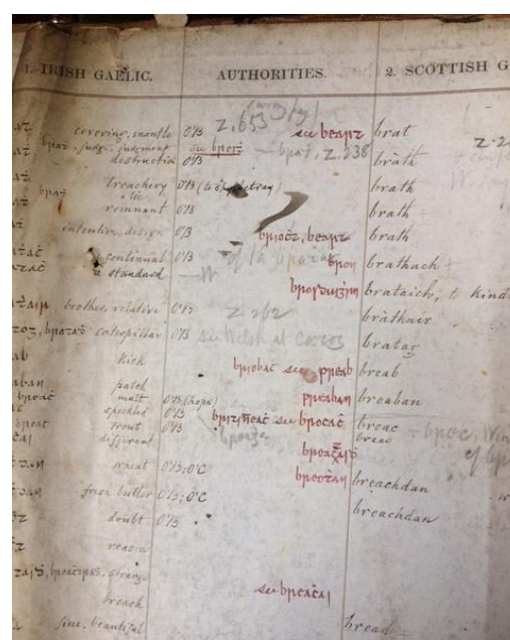
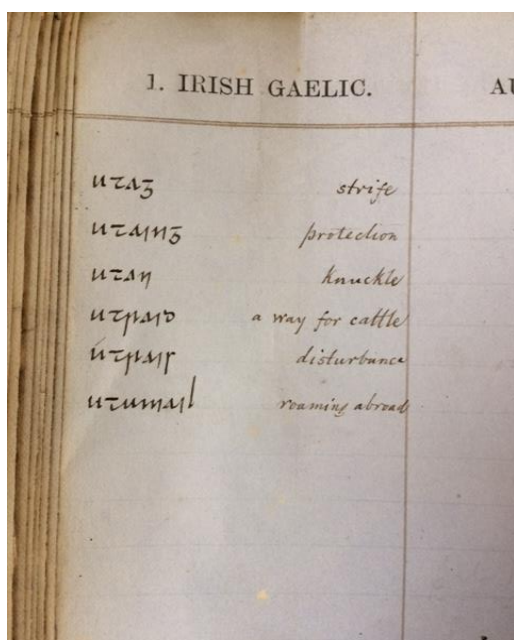
However, the library had to close its doors again in December 2021, as the lease on our premises had expired, and the building was to be sold. New premises had been identified, but because of delays in obtaining the materials for the alterations we were unable to move in at once, and the collection moved into store until March 2022. By the end of the month the collection had been reinstated on the new shelves, and we are (almost) ready for re-opening at the end of April 2022, with a week-long Festival of Mistakes.

Dr Helen S Williams, Librarian

THE LINEN HALL LIBRARY

As the Linen Hall navigated the phases of the pandemic, 2021 was a year of recovery and reconnection. The need for remote services brought into sharp focus the value of the cataloguing and digitisation of our collections, ensuring not only their preservation and longevity, but their accessibility by stretching the physical boundaries of the Library. The collection-based extraORDINARYwomen project, focusing on the culturally and historically significant collections and archives of the Library which reflect and illustrate women's lives and experiences in Northern Ireland, added to our digitised content with unique primary materials from the world-renowned Northern Ireland Political Collection, Theatre and Performing Arts archive, and Literary archives, with an emphasis on the insightful Traveller collection and LGBTQ+ archives. This project allowed us to procure a content management system for the archives, ephemera, and objects held at the Library, meaning they can be documented to the same high standards as our books and pamphlets.

In addition, we focused on maximising the opportunity of support for the collections facilitated by funding designed to enhance the sustainability of our rare and unique collections for now and the future. As such we were able to undertake several evidence-based works, including a preservation assessment survey, which provided an overview of the conservation needs of the collections.



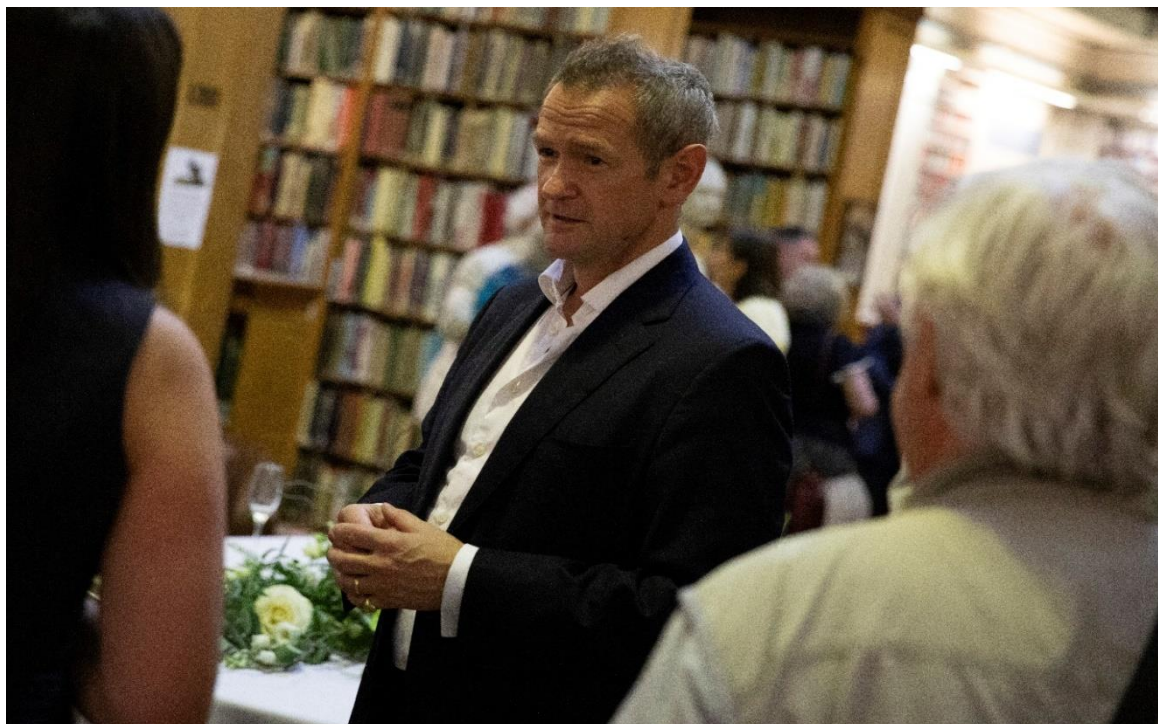
Pages from the Robert McAdam manuscript of the Comparative Lexicon

Generous funding supported our Irish language collection. An expansive collection, it is made up of historic and contemporary material - works of history, memoir, fiction, poetry, and linguistics, as well as periodicals and offprints to encourage and support research and linguistic development. It is a living collection which is added to through acquisition and donation, and funding facilitated much needed remedial and preventative conservation of books and periodicals. A treasure of the collection is the Robert McAdam comparative lexicon – from circa 1885, extant handwritten volumes of comparisons of Irish headwords with 28 other languages. Representing a major contribution to the canon of Irish scholarship, funding allowed for interventions by an expert paper conservator which prepared the lexicon for scanning to create digital surrogate copies of this unique gem. During this period, we also shone a light on the conservation of the Gibson Collection of Robert Burns with digital and promotional curation and interpretation of this important collection – variously described in our written history as ‘unequaled’, and ‘without exception the most complete embodiment of the widespread influence of Burns’. And we again focused on the archive of Michael McLaverty through the biennial short story award given in his name. A record number of entries contributed to the Linen Hall’s continued celebration of the legacy of one of Ireland’s most important writers. When we regained access to the physical building and collections, alongside welcoming back our members and visitors with care and sensitivity, the collections team at the Linen Hall worked tremendously hard to minimise the impact of closure on collections care and made great strides to progress collections projects. Donations also flooded in, and we were overwhelmed by the generosity of members and supporters.

Samantha McCombe, Librarian

THE LITERARY & PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY OF NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

The Lit & Phil re-opened its doors in April 2021, but with limited opening hours and some restrictions still in place. Events were limited to online lectures and readings via Zoom until the summer when a few public events took place with limited capacity. In September the Society had a



Re-opening event with Newcastle Lit & Phil Patron, Alexander Armstrong

reopening party with guest of honour, Honorary President, Alexander Armstrong. By October we reopened fully, staff returned to their full-time hours and the events programme was once again in full swing. Although the Society lost approximately 300 members after March 2020, we saw an encouraging increase in membership from the autumn, and the by the end of March we had made up much lost ground.

Kay Easson, Librarian

LIVERPOOL ATHENAEUM

During the last year we have continued to make progress with our Library stacks. We are removing pre 1700 material from the open shelves and giving it a safer storage space in our roller stacks. The stack is undergoing a thorough clean of the shelves and several workstations will be installed.

In-depth two-hour Library visits have been offered to our members and these have proved very popular with places taken as soon as the dates are announced. Members can see a selection of our rare book collection at these events.

Social life at the Athenaeum is returning. The Library and Archive Group have a programme of talks featuring maps and research items from our collection.

The Athenaeum has published a book – ‘*A visit to Demerara 1828-29*’ – based on a manuscript journal by Robertson Gladstone who visited plantations in Demerara on behalf of his Father. The book also

contains transcriptions of letters sent to John Gladstone from Demerara and the Caribbean contained in the Gladstone Library, Hawarden.

The number of volunteers working in the library has increased – they take part in cataloguing, listing and sorting boxes of materials and stewarding in the Library when staff are not present.

We send our good wishes to all the Institutions and hope that there are brighter days ahead for us all.

Joan Hanford, Librarian

THE LONDON LIBRARY

The London Library continued to grow membership, increasing by a net of 337 in 2021/22. Events were held in all formats, online only, in person and hybrid including an online festival in May 2021 saw over 1800 people purchasing tickets across 18 events over 3 days and our regular public events programme saw 1895 attendees across 24 events throughout the year. We were also delighted to bring back our Members' Christmas Party in December and New Members' Evening in March. It was another overwhelmingly successful year for the Emerging Writers Programme with almost 1000 applicants for the 40 places, and we published an anthology of works by the second cohort in November 2021. We were very grateful to see our pandemic efforts recognised by two award nominations at the Bookseller Awards, one for the LitFest and the other for the team who delivered our extended postal loans service during the lockdowns. We have continued to supply books by post at no cost to members and are considering options for this service as we emerge from the



Poet Inua Ellams performs at his R.A.P. Party, a curated evening of hip-hop inspired poems and music held on 19 November 2021 at The London Library.

pandemic. We also put over 700m of periodicals into off-site store to create a new reading room which opened in April 2021 to mitigate seat loss due to social-distancing. As these periodicals were also available online, this has given us a useful insight into collection usage given our ongoing need to carry out collection management to enable us to continue to acquire new books.

Matthew Brook, Director of Collections and Library Services

THE MARYLEBONE CRICKET CLUB LIBRARY

The Marylebone Cricket Club Library contains the world's largest and most comprehensive collection of books and publications dedicated to cricket. Spanning over 20,000 titles from the latest books and magazines to rare editions and pamphlets from the game's earliest days, the Library is an invaluable resource for authors, researchers and journalists. As well as a complete set of *Wisden Cricketers' Almanack*, the collection also includes the only known complete set of *Britcher's Scores* and many other items of a rare and precious nature. Many works on other bat and ball games are also featured in the collection, most notably on real tennis, a sport with which MCC has a long association. The collection is currently growing at a rate of approximately 400 volumes per year with new items arriving from all over the world covering all aspects of the game and its history. Where possible, the MCC Library also seeks to enhance the collection by acquiring old and rare works second hand. While the MCC Library operates as a private library for MCC Members on match days, the Library is open by appointment to external researchers on non-match days throughout the year.

The first donation of a book to MCC was in 1893, when Captain H. B. Sutherland donated a set of eleven volumes of *The Badminton Library of Sports and Games*. The Library itself was originally housed in the Pavilion at Lord's Cricket Ground, and when the Club's first Curator, Diana Rait Kerr, was appointed in 1946, she devised a classification system for the library books which is still used today. Owing to space, the library collection was moved to a series of converted bathrooms on the top floor of the Memorial Block opposite the Pavilion in 1973 and extended to its current size in 1985.

Robert Curphey, Archive and Library Manager

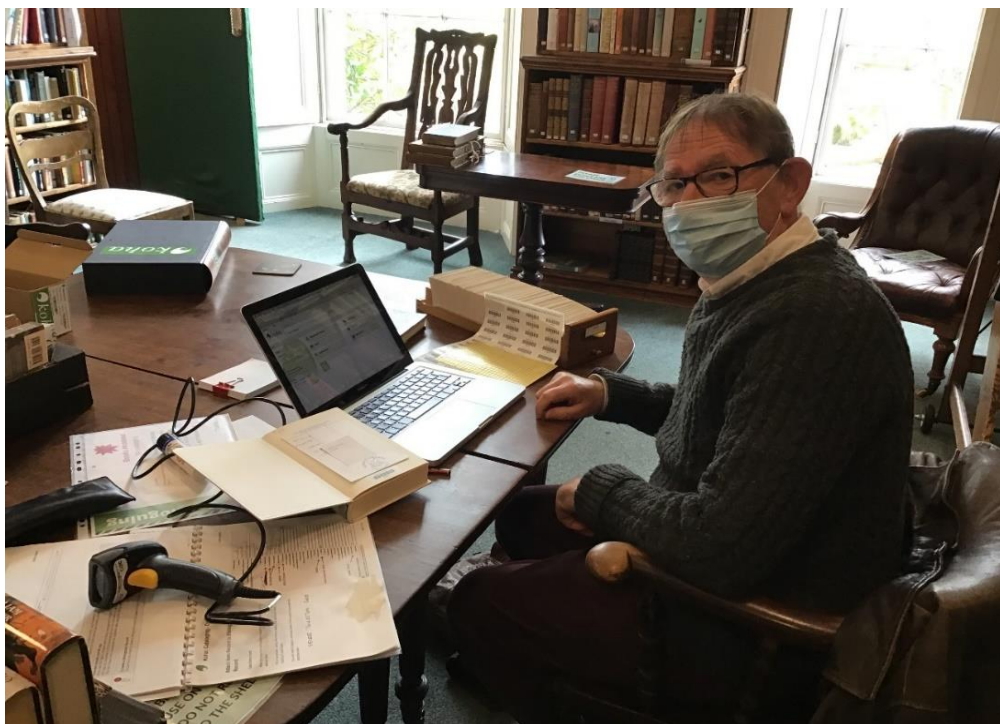
THE MORRAB LIBRARY, PENZANCE

2021 has seen the Morrab Library work to recover, rebuild and grow after the numerous lockdowns of the previous year. We re-opened our doors to members on 14th April, offering our loans service and areas for members to research and work. Classes we host at the library such as our Shakespeare group recommenced in September and our talks programmes resumed in November – whenever possible, the talks are now being filmed and uploaded to our website for future access.

The library grew its membership across the year, with evidence of more families and students joining us, resulting from improved promotion and outreach work. Our existing members also supported us by renewing their subscriptions and providing endless encouragement and approval of our actions throughout the year. Enormous thanks must be given to our team of more than 70 volunteers who

persevered throughout the lockdown and limited re-opening period, and who embraced the full re-opening of the library with nothing but enthusiasm, support and hard work. It is they that keep our library doors open, supporting the small team of staff, and ensuring all members and visitors receive a warm welcome and access to our collections.

Our work to digitise the library catalogue continues, with volunteers learning to use our new library system, KOHA, and creating thousands of records from our fiction collection to date. Work by volunteers also continues in adding the records of our archive collection to the National Archives DISCOVERY catalogue, and the scanning and uploading of our historic photographic collection to our own website.



First book catalogued at Morrab Library - May 2021

We also conducted a very successful short story competition in 2021, attracting 85 entries from adults and children, and held an afternoon tea to celebrate the winners, where we were joined via ZOOM by the actress Maxine Peake, who recorded a reading of the winning entry for our website.

We look forward to a busy year, welcoming new members and visitors, continuing to build on our cataloguing and outreach projects, and enjoying the beautiful library which we are fortunate to safeguard.

Lisa Di Tommaso, Librarian

OXFORD UNION LIBRARY

Following the easing of national lockdown restrictions in April 2021, we started welcoming our members back with a click and collect service, then on-site with a booking system, before finally returning to 'normal service'. It was a staggered reopening period, but a successful one. It feels like we've been busier than ever: The bulk of our active membership are University students who are clearly relishing being able to socialise and work together and making up for lost time. There's a pleasing bustle in the library!

There has also been a steady increase in non-members booking in to view the library and buildings, and we're looking forward to a busy summer with tour groups flocking back. We've also had an uptake in the amount of filming on-site, as well as private event hire.

Work on digitising some of our collections has begun to pick up pace and we're keen to expand our digital offering over the coming years. One of the upsides of the pandemic has been the opportunity to pick up new skills and ideas and apply them to what has traditionally been quite an 'analogue' library and bring it into the digital age. We're quite a small library with limited online resources so it's been great to expand our horizons. We've got our bicentenary coming up next year, so watch this space...



A digitised photo of the Old Library from circa 1909

Tom Corrick, Librarian-in-Charge

PLYMOUTH PROPRIETARY LIBRARY

In March 2022, Darren Bevin was appointed as the new Library Manager of the Plymouth Proprietary Library (PPL). He was a committee member of the ILA (2016-2019) and hosted and spoke at the ILA's Annual Conference at Chawton House in 2017 whilst its Librarian.

The PPL are attempting to return to normality after the pandemic lockdowns that followed the move to new premises in 2018. Events are now restarting again at the library. The first of these was a play reading by Laura Horton, Plymouth's first woman and playwright in the role of Plymouth Laureate of Words. The reading coincided with a generous donation of new modern plays by Concord Theatrical and Paines Plough to celebrate World Book Day on 3rd March.

The PPL is actively looking at ways to increase membership numbers and will be putting on more talks and readings throughout the year to tie in with the return of reading groups, coffee mornings and art groups that have historically been staple events at the library. Darren will be representing the PPL at the ILA's annual conference in Birmingham in May 2022.

Darren Bevin, Library Manager

POWYSLAND LIBRARY

The Powysland Club was founded in 1867 for the Collection and Printing for use of the Members of the Historical, Archaeological, Ecclesiastical, Genealogical and Literary Remains of Montgomeryshire. The Rt. Hon. The Eighth Earl of Powis is President, thereby following a family tradition of holding this position.

The Powysland Library is housed on the second floor of Triangle House, Welshpool and is open two mornings a week for 2 hours each. Members are allowed to borrow books, and non-members are welcome but are not allowed to take them out. We currently have 250 members.

Lectures, held in various parts of the County, will resume in April and details of a Summer Excursion to Wroxeter (Viriconium) Roman City is planned for the end of July. Our Excursions extend to sites within the old County of Montgomeryshire and further afield.

The Club publishes *Montgomeryshire Collections* which are sent to Members but are also available for purchase. The first issue appeared in 1868 and a special Volume 100 was published in 2012. The original aim was to include "a Monasticon, an Ecclesiasticon, a Castellarium, a Mansionarium, a Villare and a Parochiale, a Chartularium, an Obituarium, an Ordinary of Arms, an Itinerarium, traditions, folk lore and ballads". Indeed, current issues encompass just as wide a range of subjects from prehistory to records of memories of folk still alive today. Volume 110 was published most recently.

A list of recent purchases/donations to the library include:

- *Music in Newtown; a brief illustrated history*, Anne Owen, published by Newtown Local History Group, 2021, Newtown.
- *Masters and Matrons of the Llanfyllin Workhouse. 1839-1882*, Frances Ward, John Hainsworth (eds), 2021, Llanfillin Dolydd.
- *Royalism, Religion and Revolution; Wales:1640-1688*, Sarah Ward Clavier, 2021, Boydell Press,
- *The Country Houses of Shropshire*, Gareth Williams, 2021, Boydell Press.
- *A Village Through Time*, Paul Hughes, 2021, Llansilin Local History Society.
- *Temlau Peintiedig: Painted Temples; Wallpaintings and Rood-screens in Welsh Churches, 1200-1800*, Jane Rutherford, Richard Suggett, Anthony J Parkinson, 2021, RCAHM (Wales)

Margaret Stacey, Trustee

TAVISTOCK SUBSCRIPTION LIBRARY

Tavistock Subscription Library is a small reference library housing collections relating to local writers and the local area especially Dartmoor. During 2021 we worked to fulfil our charitable obligations in a more meaningful way by giving global online access to rare books scanned from our collections. Our catalogue may be found at www.tavistocksubscriptionlibrary.co.uk.

Penny Gardiner, Trustee

THOMAS PLUME'S LIBRARY

Thomas Plume's Library was closed from January until the end of June in 2021 whilst our new ceiling was being installed. In July the Library contents were returned from the Essex Record Office and we spent the month unwrapping the books and re-shelving them. The building renovations included new storage heaters and a fire suppression system (which expels a gas that turns to powder to remove oxygen from the air).

We opened on Heritage Open Days with an exhibition of books on the national theme of "Edible England". Topics included, amongst others: the bread assizes, cultivation of fruit trees, design of greenhouses, beekeeping and, from the post-Plume collection, innovations in farming technologies at Bentalls. We are grateful to the volunteers who helped to steward the exhibits inside the Library, and the Friends who took bookings and controlled the numbers from outside the building. The Friends also ran a second-hand book stall in St Peter's Garden to raise funds to buy books from our missing list.



Heritage Open Day at Thomas Plume's Library

For our annual Plume Lecture, Professor Andrew Pettegree and Dr Arthur der Weduwen gave a fabulous talk on 23rd October on the topic of "Libraries in the Age of Thomas Plume: Fragility and Perseverance". They have joined the Friends, and Dr der Weduwen has been helping us to identify some of our books printed in Europe through his access to the Universal Short Title Catalogue.

With generous support from the Friends of Thomas Plume's Library and the Friends of the National Libraries we were able to buy five books from our missing list from the auction of The Fox Pointe Manor Library, as follows:

- Sir Balthazar Gerbier, *A Brief Discourse Concerning the Three chief Principles of Magnificent Building. Viz Solidity, Conveniency, and Ornament*, 1662.

- Lucas Jacobsen Debes, *Faeroae, & Faeroa Reserata: that is a Description of the Islands & Inhabitants of Foeroe*, translated by John Sterpin, printed by F.L. for William Iles, 1676.
- Joseph Georgirenes, *A Description of the Present State of Samos, Nicaria, Patmos, and Mount Athos*, first edition, printed by W. G. and sold by Moses Pitt, 1678.
- Richard Kirby and John Bishop. *The Marrow of Astrology*, printed by Joseph Streater, 1687.
- Miguel de Luna, *The History of the Conquest of Spain by the Moors. Together with the Life of the Most Illustrious Monarch Almanzor*, 1687.

Approximately 300 Plume Academy students came to the Library during November to see two exhibitions relevant to their history curriculum. Members of the Friends volunteered as stewards and talked to the students about either: natural philosophy and natural history; or history, geography and travel. The stewards enjoyed the visits, and we are very grateful for their help. We are expecting to see the best of the essays the students will produce following their visits, from which the Library staff and members of the Friends committee will choose an overall winner and three runners-up. Book tokens for these students will then be presented by the Friends.

The family of a long-standing Friend of the Library recently donated his collection of books relating to Samuel Richardson's *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded*, amassed over twenty years during his career as a rare books dealer. The collection includes foreign language editions, dramatic adaptations, responses and parodies (some extremely rare), six prints and a portrait miniature. It is thought to be the largest and most complete collection of Pamela, and we hope that it will attract scholars from around the world.

Dr Helen Kemp, Plume Librarian

WHITBY LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, LIBRARY AND ARCHIVE

We have two important projects in hand. We have been creating a database for the Muster Rolls for some time (the Muster Rolls being the records Masters made of men on board their vessels and payments from each seaman per voyage towards the seamen's hospital fund throughout the 18th century). Because of war-time bombing losses in other ports, Whitby is unique in having a continuous run of these records. We intend to have them available this year to read on our website. We also have a continuous run of the *Whitby Gazette* from its first issue in the mid-19th century and, when the John Tindale exhibition finishes in the museum in May, we shall have a unit from it of a searchable *Gazette* database for Library users.

Eileen Shone, Library and Archives

THE WORKING CLASS MOVEMENT LIBRARY

Library Manager

At the end of February, the Library Manager, Lynette Cawthra retired after fifteen years at the WCML. The role of Library Manager has been taken up by Belinda Scarlett. Belinda has worked in the heritage sector for the last decade, most recently as Curator of Women's football at the National Football

Museum, Manchester and prior to that as Creative Learning Officer at Liverpool Archive Service. Belinda will help to develop and deliver a new strategic vision for the library that links to its mission statement. We plan to develop a new programme of events, activities and exhibitions over the next 12-18 months that helps to develop a wider audience for the library.

Events

The WCML has continued to deliver online talks and hybrid events on a variety of topics throughout 2021/2022 with over 60 Invisible Histories talks delivered to date. All our talks are available on the library's YouTube channel – www.youtube.com/wcmlibrary/videos

In September 2021 we held a Heritage Open Day event that focused on the library garden and in November we held our first Engels week, delivering a combination of in-person and online events to make Engels accessible to a new audience.

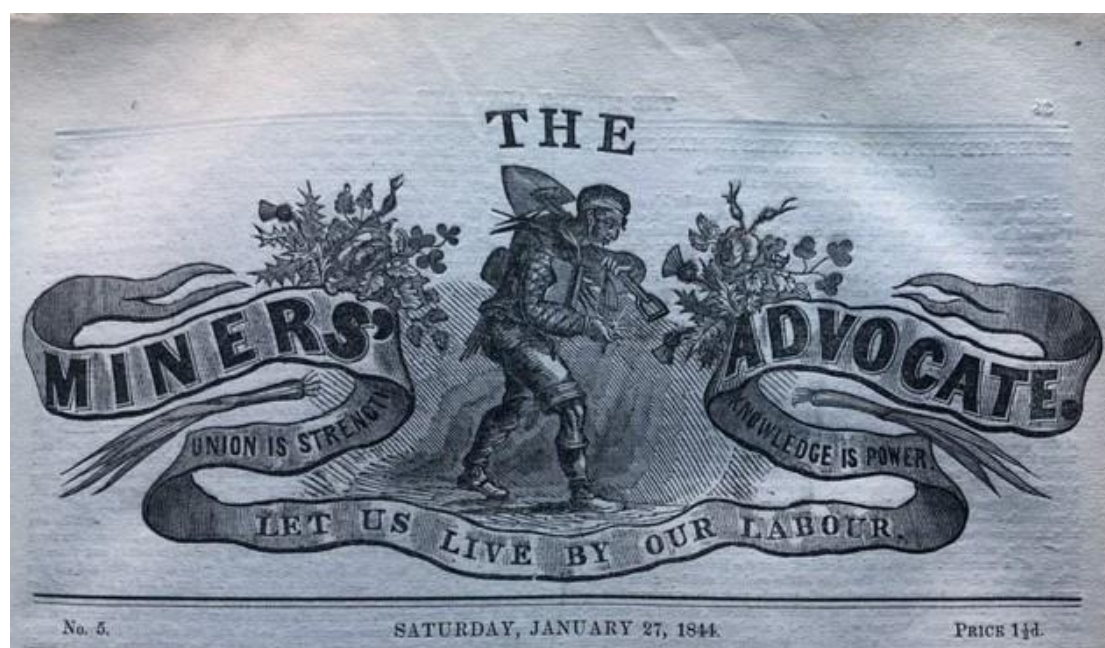
From April this year we are developing a new events programme and the details for 2022/2023 should be finalised soon.

Exhibitions

During 2021 and early 2022 we have had two guest exhibitions on display.

The first was a partnership with the Piston Pen and Press project 'Literature in the mines' and the second 'Working class readers in Victorian Manchester & Salford' was developed in partnership with the University of Strathclyde and was accompanied by material from our own collections.

The exhibition is viewable on Friday afternoons, which is when the library is currently open to drop-in visitors.



Publicity for partnership project exhibition 'Literature in the Mines'

We will be working on a new exhibition that will be curated in house and open (hopefully) by the end of 2022.

Partnership working

We have continued to work in partnership with other libraries and cultural organisations in Manchester

In summer 2021 we contributed to a piece of public art, 'Big Ben Lying Down' that was commissioned by Manchester International Festival. [Big Ben Lying Down With Political Books - Manchester International Festival \(mif.co.uk\)](https://www.mif.co.uk)

Manchester Festival of Libraries

In 2021 we also took part in the first Manchester Festival of Libraries and delivered partnership events with the Portico Library and Salford City Libraries.

Volunteers

We have begun to invite volunteers back on site now that Covid restrictions have been lifted. They continue to contribute greatly to the work of the library. We will be recruiting for new volunteer roles in 2022 to assist with delivering tours, digitization and social media.

Digitization

We have continued to digitize the library's collection and made progress with a number of our collections. We are currently working with students from University of Salford who are digitizing our Fascism and Anti-Fascism collection

Belinda Scarlett, Library Manager

NOTES



ILA Chair, Emma Marigliano and President, Neil Pearson, open day two of the ILA Conference 2021 – The Great Good Place ... at a great good place, The Leeds Library (24th-25th September)



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