

CLIS Christians in
Library and
Information
Services



FOUNDED IN 1976 AS THE LIBRARIANS' CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

An organisation 'in liaison' with the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals. Affiliated to: Christian Research Association; Christians at Work; Evangelical Alliance; Transform Work UK; Universities' & Colleges' Christian Fellowship. Web Site: www.christianlis.org.uk

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E-NEWSLETTER, No. 81, CHRISTMAS 2018

E-NEWSLETTER AND CHRISTIAN LIBRARIAN

For various editorial reasons we have decided to delay the next issue of **Christian Librarian** but we are currently working on an expanded Winter 2018/Spring 2019 issue which will be mailed to members and subscribers early in the new year. In the meantime we are pleased to send you the latest issue of our **E-Newsletter** which we hope you will enjoy reading. So that our members without e-mail facilities do not feel too deprived we are sending them printed copies of the **E-Newsletter** on this one occasion.

If you have e-mail facilities but are not currently on the mailing list to receive the **E-Newsletter**, please let us know and we will be pleased to add you to the list. Sending the **E-Newsletter** electronically enables us to send out information without delay and we can save postal costs when distributing such items as the annual general meeting agendas.

PUBLISHERS AND ROBOTS

Next year's Conference is to be held on **Saturday 6 April 2019** at **Blue Boar House, 5 Blue Boar Street, Oxford, OX1 4EE**. The conference will be looking at the twin themes of Christian publishing and artificial intelligence and robotics. Our first speaker will be **Manoj Raithatha** who runs the publishing company **Instant Apostle** and will be speaking on Christian publishing for the twenty-first century.

Our afternoon speaker will be Dr. **Nigel Crook**, Head of the Department of Computing and Communication Technologies at **Oxford Brookes University**, whose subject is to be '**The Virtuous Robot: Developing Robots with Moral Competence**'. This should be an enjoyable conference with contrasting speakers and topics. Please book the date now and watch this space for further details as they become available.

Details of other CLIS activities in 2019 will appear in the forthcoming edition of **Christian Librarian**.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our **Annual General Meeting** is to be held on **Saturday 6 April 2019**, from 11.20. a.m., as part of the annual conference proceedings. Please let me have any motions for discussion, or nominations for office, in writing not later than one calendar month before the meeting.

Nominations are invited for the following executive committee positions: *Secretary, Treasurer, Recruitment Secretary, Library Assistance Manager, Webmaster, Overseas Secretary*, and *Members Without Portfolio* (x 3). Each nomination needs a proposer and seconder and the candidate also needs to indicate his or her willingness to serve.

Some present committee members may be willing to stand for re-election but we are always pleased to hear from additional members who would be interested in joining the executive committee.

THE KILNS REVISITED

On Saturday 20 October 2018, we organised a return visit to **The Kilns**, the home that C. S. Lewis shared with his brother Warren, from 1930 – 1963. The house is situated in Headington, a suburb of Oxford, and has been decorated and furnished to recall the way it would have looked when the Lewis brothers were living there.

Our photograph below shows members of the CLIS group outside **The Kilns** and was taken by our member Trish Marshall. After an informative tour of the house, the CLIS group moved on to **Holy Trinity Church**, the parish church of Headington, where Lewis and his brother are buried and there is a commemorative window depicting scenes from **The Chronicles of Narnia**. A more complete report of these visits is currently available on our web site and will also appear in the next issue of **Christian Librarian**.



ANGLO-SAXON KINGDOMS

The **British Library**, at 96, Euston Road, London, NW1 2DB, is currently hosting an exhibition which illustrates the treasures of the Anglo-Saxon era. The exhibition includes a number of early manuscripts of the Bible including the beautifully illuminated **Lindisfarne Gospels** and the **Codex Amiatinus**, a giant Northumbrian Bible taken to Italy in 716 A.D. and now returned to England for the first time in thirteen hundred years.

Other items of interest in the exhibition include a manuscript of Bede's **Ecclesiastical History**, the manuscript of **Beowulf**, and finds from Sutton Hoo and the Staffordshire Hoard. The world famous **Domesday Book** offers its unrivalled depiction of the landscape of late Anglo-Saxon England.

The exhibition continues until 19 February 2019 and you can find more information, including opening hours and admission prices, at www.bl.uk/events/anglo-saxon-kingdoms

POETRY ALIVE

On Saturday 17 November 2018 the **Arts Centre Group** organised **Poetry Alive** at the **Westminster Central Hall**. The guest speaker was Lord Leslie Griffiths, well known as a Methodist leader and broadcaster, who took his audience on an imaginary tour of his native Wales, pausing to read some of the poetry of writers who had been born or lived in Wales. These included such major figures as George Herbert, Dylan Thomas, Gerard Manley Hopkins, and R. S. Thomas. Christine Smith, of **Canterbury Press**, spoke about her role in publishing and love for poetry. A selection of poetry with a Christian or religious theme was read by Emma Danby and our own past speaker Tony Jasper. Poets featured included our own former speakers David Porter and Stewart Henderson. Prizes were awarded to the winners of this year's **Jack Clemo Poetry Competition**, named in honour of the celebrated Cornish poet.

RECENT ARTICLES

I have recently been writing articles for the **Evangelical Alliance** web site and these may be of interest to members of CLIS.

One such article is a review of a book **Creation in Crisis: Christian perspectives on sustainability** (SPCK, £18.95, ISBN 978-0281061907) which deals with Christian responses to the environment, global warming and climate change. My article suggests ways in which Christians can show concern for the environment but perhaps librarians can also highlight environmental concerns by arranging book displays, compiling reading lists, and inviting members of environmental groups to give talks on library premises. You can read the article at <https://www.eauk.org/news-and-views/is-gods-creation-still-in-crisis>

My other recent article went out as the EA's *Friday Night Theology* article and reflects on the recent controversy surrounding Sir Philip Green plus the recent death of Eugene Peterson, translator of **The Message** Bible. You can read this at <https://www.eauk.org/news-and-views/justice-for-the-poor-and-great>

Graham Hedges

THE IMPACT OF READING

Demos carried out research over the summer of 2018 to assess the potential impact of reading on several great challenges of our time: loneliness, mental health problems, dementia and social (im)mobility ... In a worst case scenario, the social, political and financial pressures of these challenges will pit the young against the old, the privileged against the disadvantaged and the healthy against the ill. This report shows that books can bring us back together in surprising ways. Of course, reading is no panacea. But upon review of the evidence, there is simply no excuse to not take reading seriously as part of the solution.

Those of us who have ever been involved with public libraries professionally know the above to be true and libraries offer so much more than books and reading: PC access, assistance with information literacy and online forms, a free and neutral civic space, homework and research help, rhyme time and reading for energetic or shy toddlers, someone to talk to whatever your age or needs. Sadly, the long-term good that public libraries do is having to be weighed by our local authorities against the short-term legal necessity of bringing in a balanced budget while managing the immediate acute social care and child protection needs of their population.

A petition at <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/228742> calls on Parliament to be honest about the strain they are putting on local authorities. It calls on the government to invest directly in our public libraries, with additional funding that is ring-fenced. I use the word '*invest*' deliberately as that is what it is, an investment that in the longer term saves society money as well as improving the health and mental health, academic and employment prospects and pleasure in life of countless citizens.

Karen Hans

THE WORD ON THE SHELF

"For every reader his book" say Ranganathan's *Five Laws of Library Science*. The brilliant Indian librarian had a point, no book is useful if it remains stuck on a shelf. The whole point of librarianship is to match up books (and other information sources) with the people who need them. We are not preserving books for their own sake, despite the jokes we all make about how lovely our library would be it wasn't for the readers!

Words need users and if the Word himself came down from heaven just over two thousand years ago now, he came because he had something we needed, a divine Word seeking those who needed that '*heavenly book*'. God made himself available to sort out a problem many people don't even realise we have, the problem of being lost and estranged from the God who made us and yearns with longing for his people to know him.

God is not in his heaven like some volume hidden away in a remote stack or a document hidden in offline storage. Many often think of him that way, remote from us, but we know and Christmas proves, that that isn't true. He comes to us, the Word we need when we need it. He is indeed “*for every reader his book*”, just what we want when we really want it, the Word for Christmas telling that there isn't a remote God, but one who cares very deeply.

God with us, off the shelf, out of the store, the Word made flesh who dwelt among us.

Richard M. Waller

This issue of the E-Newsletter comes with best wishes and Christian greetings for Christmas and the New Year from the Officers and Executive Committee of Christians in Library and Information Services.



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