



eNewsletter no. 88 December 2020

Emmanuel 2020

This year many of us will have joined church services by electronic means, whether by live stream, online chat or downloaded video. In some cases it has increased 'attendance' and I have heard of a church planning on developing their web-based services in the long-term.

I have also found myself taking more interest in the services broadcast on TV and radio. The BBC Radio 4 Good Friday Meditation presented by Baptist minister Richard Littledale, particularly struck me. The programme featured a monologue by an NHS consultant, who caught the coronavirus and recovered. Back in April we were all too aware of how much danger there was for hospital staff, with lack of protection and exposure to high levels of the virus. In the broadcast, the consultant described his experience of waking up at night being short of breath and wondering whether he would survive. He came close to fainting. Panic set in and he couldn't sleep. So he lay awake and read Scripture to himself, reading as it were to where he was affected. He found an identification with Jesus, suffering on the cross, comparing the crown of thorns to his 'corona' - the virus which was rapidly multiplying inside him. He reflected that "coronavirus, more than any other virus, feeds on fear as a fuel". He remembered asking the Holy Spirit to enter him and all who were sick. "Somehow my fear eased and my fever felt easier to bear".

I found myself reflecting on the way in which this doctor's professional and spiritual life were running very closely together. It reminded me of another acute situation, recounted by American journalist and writer Terry Anderson, after he was held captive for more than six years during the hostage crisis of the mid-1980s. In his autobiography he included a number of poems, in which he speaks about having felt a 'loving touch'. It includes the lines:

*Faith's what you find
when you're alone
and find that you're not.
(From Den of Lions, 1993)*

Anderson was to find a deeper faith as his talent for poetry flourished.

In 2020, many people have found themselves out of work or unable to find employment ; for others working practices have changed, possibly for good. Among those working from home some have found it to be no hardship, but just about everyone working in libraries will have experienced some kind of change. This Christmas, we can pray for each other, remembering those who have found 2020 to be particularly tough, but also knowing that there will have been some extraordinary stories when God has broken in.

Robert Foster
Chair, CLIS Committee.

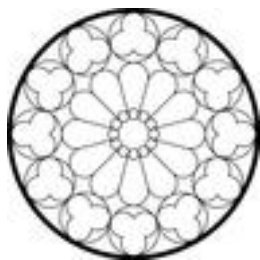
A Strange Year! But what of the Future?

Covid-19 has brought changes to our lives that are not for the better unless we are utterly misanthropic! It has also brought an unrelated change to CLIS with the death of Graham. He was very much the man who did things and the future will have to look different. We are inviting discussion of this very subject on 16th January. The Committee will be meeting to make a Go/No-Go decision on the Annual Conference and then they will welcome anyone who wants to join us to a Zoom discussion of the future of our fellowship. This will be the start of a protracted process, we can't just simply say 'Find a replacement secretary and editor'. Not going to happen. Graham made it his life, most of us can't give it so much time and effort. If you value the fellowship and want to contribute to how it might look in the future, then look out for the email inviting you to the meeting and join in.

Richard Waller, CLIS President

“2021 Visions”

Annual CLIS Conference



Bloomsbury Baptist Church

17 April 2021

With speakers:

Mark Woods (Bible Society)

Alexandra Davis (Pilgrim's Friend)

For further details and booking form

www.christianlis.org.uk

CLIS Treasurer

*At our 2021 AGM
the current treasurer will complete her term of office, and
will not be seeking
re-election.*

*If you would be willing to take
on this task or would like to
know more please contact the
CLIS Chair, Robert Foster by
emailing:
robert_foster31@hotmail.com*

The Editor of Christian Librarian

It's a testament to Graham that despite variable health in the last few years, he managed to produce regular issues of *Christian Librarian*. This was due in part to the fact that he liked doing it. More than once he said to me that if he had to choose between being secretary and publications editor he would prefer the latter, remarkable administrator though he was.

Graham was a good writer - readable and concise – most especially, I often think, for all those news pages. Yet he was always on the look-out for material, and was invariably delighted when he received something. I must have tested his patience sorely on occasions when deadlines approached and sometimes passed. He was very accepting of what you sent him, though. It didn't have to be good journalistic prose. It could be brief or long (within limits), and he didn't mind if the writer had something forthright or challenging to say.

Back in the early 2000s I was having considerable difficulty finishing the pro-forma for my MCLIP. I had got to the point where I had put it very much on the 'back-burner' and was quite glad not to think about it. During that long period of time, Graham had asked me on a couple of occasions to write something for *Christian Librarian* on the annual conferences. I can't say I jumped at it. But as it happened these two pieces of fairly ordinary writing filled a significant gap in my pro-forma. When I finally got my submission together, and had the obligatory interview, one member of the panel mentioned the (then) LCF conferences, and said how interesting our events seemed to be. (This was in the days when there was a calendar in the CILIP magazine.) So I'm very grateful for Graham's encouragement, and the way in which being a member of CLIS helped me in a very practical way.

Apart from taking pleasure in being the editor, Graham was also aware that *Christian Librarian* was a vital cog in the organisation, just as much as the AGM and other events. Sadly, we now find ourselves without an editor. If you are thinking about whether you could be the next editor, please get in touch with me. You don't have to commit yourself to a long period, and it's not expected that you would have to it in Graham's style. In fact you would be encouraged to do your own thing with it. The committee is able to help with getting it laid out and printed. You certainly don't have to be committee secretary as well. But we need an editor to receive material and submit it. Can you help?

Robert Foster

Chair, CLIS Executive Committee

robert_foster31@hotmail.com

Libraries in the time of COVID

Karen Hans

I thought it might be interesting for other library staff, current and retired, if I wrote about the experience of dealing with COVID – lockdown and beyond – from a school library viewpoint. This is also a very personal viewpoint, partly because no two school libraries are the same.

March 2020 was extra pressurised as I simultaneously prepared for and promoted our major author event of the year whilst trying to decide if we should cancel it due to rising COVID19 infection rates. The same with an author event I was jointly arranging for our feeder Primary schools, the same with our cross-borough Book Quiz...you get the picture! Meanwhile I implemented my biggest ever World Book Day programme in early to mid-March. This went really well, but was very hard work. The eventual lockdown announcement was a relief in a way, despite long anticipated events being cancelled, as things had been so uncertain and my health and that of my library assistants had suffered with the indecision and the additional March stress we'd already had. As I began working from home, the library was used as our school's base for vulnerable pupils and the children of keyworkers. These were cared for by a rota of senior managers and teaching staff who had volunteered to do so. School staff (including me, but especially school leaders) worked throughout the Easter holidays.

An opinion seems to be quite widely held that while schools were closed school staff were 'enjoying furlough'. As librarians one of our mantra's is 'Facts Matter' and the situation as far as I know was that without planning time, without training time, without technology in place, without pupils who were used to independent learning, without many pupils having the necessary IT equipment or wifi or quiet space at home, teachers worked hard to deliver relevant learning tasks and materials to pupils. They were also taking on a greater and sometimes stressful pastoral roles, phoning pupils and families and sometimes delivering food at their own expense. Gradually the expertise in Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams etc developed, but with the accompanying concerns about safeguarding (when interacting online with teenagers in their bedrooms for example).

At the same time as teachers were feeling their way in the new situation, school librarians were doing the same and attempting to support pupils, parents and teachers. Before I go on to explain what I and many other did in this capacity, I must add that there were some school librarians who were, unfortunately, furloughed. As far as I know this was an independent school position only, as these are businesses whereas state schools are not. For many of these librarians it was devastating to be 'stood down' from duty. They knew they could be doing so much to support their communities, but were not allowed to do so due to financial reasons. A possibility that was open for them was to take advantage of the many excellent training webinars and courses that proliferated in lockdown 1. I must also mention that some school librarians were made redundant this year, probably due entirely to COVID. I'm sure many others, in state and independent schools, now feel uncertain about their jobs as well; the situation being back working in school varies greatly across the sector. Please do pray for school librarians, whether in school day-to-day or out of work, it is a very stressful time for all.

The first thing I did in lockdown was to curate an online resources list for staff, organized by subject and including both free and subscription resources (some of which had recently become digital). Schools were bombarded with 'free offers' from Ed-tech companies, some of which were fantastic and some thinly veiled marketing opportunities. I saw it as my role to check into these and only pass on to staff those that were worthwhile and, where relevant, I'd already set up password access etc. I also created several resources to support students including:

- HOME LIFE & LEARNING LINKS – a document on the school website full of links to free reading and information literacy related resources. I also shared a version of this with our local Parent Engage Group, which they shared with the local council.
- WEEKLY BULLETIN INPUTS - for parents & pupils, ranging from free e-book, audiobook and e-comic recommendations through to VE Day related websites and writing competition links. These were drawn from a number of sources, including a range of other librarians who shared information.
- the LIBRARY TWITTER FEED - continued to highlight resources, especially online author events.

Suggested Reading from
Mrs Hans, FHS Librarian

There are two very exciting literary developments from FHS favourites to highlight this week:

- [Anthony Horowitz](#) releasing chapters of his new Diamond Brothers comedy as he writes them!
- [Harry Potter](#) being read to us a chapter at a time, the first by Daniel Radcliffe!

If these whet your appetite for more, take a look at this list of [activities that UK children's authors are offering](#) during lockdown.

Pupils with dyslexia will appreciate this [Home Help Pack](#) full of useful resources, including links to classic books in dyslexic friendly formats.

And finally, a regular source of [age-appropriate information about COVID19](#) is now available, this time from [Q-Files, an online encyclopedia](#) to support home learning (and free to all families until the end of July).

Friday 8 May:
VE Day Reading /Viewing



At Forest Hill School, we are marking VE Day this week, but what do we know about the many men and women involved in securing that victory against tyranny for Britain and her allies? When we are back in school, Mrs Hans, our School Librarian, would encourage you to access some of the many books we have on the subject, but in the meantime she has collated some website links which remember the contributions of the soldiers, including those who are sometimes overlooked:

[VE Day celebrations](#) in 1945 and [VE Day stories](#)

Second World War digital living memorial: [telling veterans' untold stories](#)

[Hello West Indies](#) – a Ministry of Information film made in 1943

[Nigerian veterans](#) speak about serving in WWII

Important role played by Arabs and Muslims in the [Second World War Allied Victory](#)

Many [Australian](#), New Zealand, Canadian and US soldiers also fought for the allies in Europe.

A hard-hitting exposé of the treatment of some [commonwealth citizens as soldiers and veterans](#)

[Commonwealth War Graves Commission](#) are encouraging the public to thank service personnel

I worked with our IT technician to set up a platform for ebooks and audiobooks. I also created a step-by-step presentation on how to log into our Library Management System from outside school. This also included instructions on how to write reviews and read those written by others, including teachers whose reviews and photos I featured on the LMS. This all facilitated and encouraged participation in the school's Annual House Reading Championship, which usually takes place for Year 7 and Year 8 pupils from March to June. I adapted it into an online format, opened it up for older years too and extended it across the summer so that the pupil Reading Champions were awarded prizes when we were back in school in September rather than having the normal whole school celebration of reading assembly in July.

The library has a stock of free books to be used for prizes etc, so I organized those appropriate to be given to pupils with particular needs; for example, if they had no books at home or no ability to access free e-books during lockdown, or if pupils had other difficult circumstances and would appreciate a gift from school. I remotely advised which books would be best to send to which pupils, library books were also loaned by post to a number of pupils on request and I remotely assisted in-school staff in locating these. The outcome of all the above activities has been an appreciation from staff and parents for the resources and recommendations.

At the end of May our school arranged to have all our Year 10 and Year 12 pupils taking turns coming into school for weekly lessons. Support staff, including me, were then put on a rota to staff the groups of keyworker children and vulnerable pupils, who were now too numerous to be housed in the library and were divided between 3 computer suites. At the same time I had just been given per-

mission to set up a 'click and collect' library book service and directed to take on the regular monitoring of and responding to home-reading submissions (library lesson homework). Library lesson teachers would normally check on the homework, but teachers were now extremely busy teaching in school some days and teaching online other days as well as planning and marking. The first two months of lockdown I had gone for my daily walk and whilst doing so had spoken to friends on the phone who I'd not caught up with for a very long time. The second two months were a lot busier, though it was nice to have limited face-to-face contact again with a few colleagues and pupils.

At the end of each term the library hosts a poetry jam and I thought an online version would be a nice end to term and something very positive that staff could do together. Recruiting and reminding staff to submit their video or audio contributions, filming and suggesting poems to others, then producing the film with our Marketing Manager was a lot of work, but it was great to focus on something that was part of our 'normal' cycle of events when things had been so abnormal. When lockdown began I naively imagined I would have time whilst working at home to get through some of the items on my 'to do list' that require a degree of thought and research time (when in school there are constant interruptions!). In reality and frustratingly that was not the case as there was so much else to do! I know many other school librarians did fantastic things that I didn't, such as reading to groups of pupils online or hosting authors by Zoom. I did manage to attend some very useful webinars, however, I also began and continue to have an input into the school's response to the anti-racism issues raised by the response to the death of George Floyd and surrounding events.

Personally I loved working from home when I had the opportunity to do so – who wouldn't prefer making a salad from the fridge and eating with the family or in the garden, rather than having to make lunch at 10pm the night before or 7am and bleary, then eating it in a rush at the office desk! I realise I am extremely fortunate to have a work laptop, adequate wifi and space to work at home, a garden to enjoy and children who are old enough not to need my help with their school work, who have other devices to work on, a husband who also wasn't furloughed or worse. Well the summer holidays came and I was able to work in the library freely by myself without worrying about being infected or infecting others. A lot of my time was taken up planning how we were going to run a library service once the school opened back to all the pupils in September, including a Risk Assessment to be drawn up and shared with the school leadership team. CILIP and the School Library Association were both very helpful with this as were discussions on the School Librarians Network email forum.



Before the holidays it had been decided that the library would be part of the Year 7 bubble and that due to the library lesson timetable we were able to have a single day each week being part of the Year 8 bubble. This means that all Year 7 pupils are able to come to the library for their library lessons and can choose to come at lunchtimes or after school to read or access the PCs to do some homework. Sadly though, as you can see from the picture, we decided that pupils browsing the shelves would not be a COVID secure way forward, hence the "crime scene" tape and the need for library staff to spend a lot of time choosing books and bringing them to the pupils, who are all sat

CHRISTIANS IN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES (CLIS) <i>Daily prayer guide for each month</i>	
2021	<p><i>Therefore we do not lose heart.</i> <i>Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.</i> 2 Cor 4 v 16-18</p>
Day	<p><i>Ask and it will be given you.</i> Mt 7.7</p>
1	Praise God for who He is - knowing that He is mighty, just, holy & love
2	Thank God for what He has done through LCF/CLIS since 1976. Thank Him for the lives of His faithful servants Graham and Philip and their work, influence and companionship within CLIS & their wider circles.
3	Ask that we will be true to our Aims and Objectives: 1: To make Jesus known within the profession 2: To provide a Christian network for the support and development of members
4	Ask that we will be true to our Aims and Objectives: 3: To promote Christian values and to be a Christian voice within the profession 4: To provide a forum for discussion of professional issues within a context of Christian belief 5: To provide associated professional services to Christian organisations both in the UK and abroad.
5	The Holy Spirit's guidance in formulating a Christian viewpoint on professional issues
6	CLIS Fellowship, love, forbearance, unity about future planning, and a deep, contagious passion for Jesus.
7	Christian representation (salt & light) in CILIP Council, Branches, Groups, staff & Ethics Committee
8	CILIP governance and members - for faithfulness, integrity and wisdom in decision making
9	CILIP policy & advocacy on: information management; school & public libraries (especially cuts which affect the vulnerable); academic resources provision; information literacy; intellectual property; censorship issues
10	CLIS President (Richard Waller) Life Vice-Presidents (Elizabeth Barber, Donald Davis, Gordon Harris, Eddie Olliffe)
11	CLIS Executive Committee and Officers. Chair: Robert Foster Treasurer: Diana Guthrie Membership: Janice Paine Scottish Secretary: Anne MacRitchie, Website Manager: John Wickenden, Overseas: Eleanor Neil Library Assistance: Rachel Johnson Prayer: Karen Hans, Andrew Parker
12	Calling of members to take on CLIS roles , especially Secretary, Treasurer & Recruitment Secretary
13	Recruitment of new members , including Christians at the start of their LIS career.
14	Publicity and promotion of CLIS. Website. Facebook, Twitter & LinkedIn Groups. Exhibitions.
15	Finance. Using our resources wisely, in light of the desire to reach new members and serve existing members
16	CLIS activities , visits, networks in the UK Regions, effectiveness of the Prayer Request Online Form
17	Publications: <i>Christian librarian</i> ; the e-newsletter, for those preparing these without Graham's unique input
18	Growth and effectiveness of UK and overseas assistance work
19	CLIS Spring Conference: for the organisers, the speakers, for godly fellowship and worship
20	CLIS Autumn Event: for the organisers, for godly fellowship and impact
21	Positive presentation of Jesus Christ to the profession and to individual colleagues
22	Organisations that CLIS supports: Evangelical Alliance, Transform Work UK, Speaking Volumes, BookAid
23	For individual Christians working in LIS UK , for their witness and wellbeing
24	For individual Christians working in LIS overseas , especially living in poverty or oppressive regimes
25	Fellowship of Christian Librarians and Information Specialists; Association of Christian Librarians USA
26	Christian Association for Librarians in Africa; Forum of Asian Theological Librarians.
27	Church libraries: those running them and their effectiveness
28	For all CLIS members: their activities and influence
29	For all CLIS members: their material, physical, emotional & spiritual wellbeing
30	For all CLIS members & families: including those who are grieving & those in a caring role
31	Christian presence at IFLA (every Aug): for godliness and impact on individuals and policy
<p><i>Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.</i> Ephesians 3:20-21</p>	