

Autumn 2013

CHRISTIAN LIBRARIAN



The Journal of the
Librarians' Christian Fellowship

CONTENTS INCLUDE

- **SATURDAY 19 OCTOBER 2013:
C.S.LEWIS DAY IN OXFORD**
- **LIFE IS LIKE RIDING A BICYCLE**
- **ON FIRE? VOLUNTEERING WITH
FLAME CHRISTIAN LOCAL RADIO**
- **AM I JUST A LIBRARIAN? PREPARING TO MAKE A
CHANGE IN CAREER PATH**
- **RETIREMENT: WHAT GOOD IS IT?**

EVENTS AT A GLANCE

SATURDAY 19 OCTOBER 2013:
**“FROM THE MIDDLE AGES TO
MIDDLE EARTH”.**

Exhibition, *Bodleian Library*, Oxford,
from 10.30.a.m. Details p. 7.

●SATURDAY 19 OCTOBER 2013:
ANNUAL PUBLIC LECTURE

*New Road Baptist Church, Bonn
Square, Oxford*, from 2.30.p.m..
Speaker: Rev. Dr. **Michael Ward** on
*Imagination, Reason, Will: A
Perspective on the Legacy of C.S.
Lewis*. Details: p. 7.

FRIDAY 22 NOVEMBER 2013:
**MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR C.S.
LEWIS**

Westminster Abbey, London, from
12.00. noon. Details p. 10.

●SATURDAY 5 APRIL 2014:
**LAUNCH CONFERENCE FOR
CHRISTIANS IN LIBRARY AND
INFORMATION SERVICES**

*Chancellor’s Room, Hughes Parry
Hall, Cartwright Gardens, London,
WC1*, from 10.30.a.m. Speakers:
Dr. **Peter Brierley**, Dr. **Neil Hudson**.
Details: p. 10.

●THURSDAY 22 MAY 2014:
**AFTERNOON VISIT TO
EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE**

*176, Copenhagen Street, London,
N1*, Details: p. 11.

PRAYER NOTES FOR AUTUMN 2013

PLEASE PRAY FOR

●LCF's Executive Committee as we
prepare for the re-launch of our
Fellowship under the new name
*Christians in Library and Information
Services*.

●Our forthcoming activities including
the 19 October lecture on **C.S.
Lewis** and next April's launch
conference for CLIS.

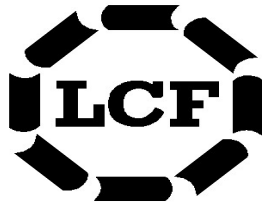
●Possible future Christian
involvement in the CILIP *Umbrella*
conferences.

●The work of *Flame Christian Radio*
and other local and national
Christian radio stations including
Premier and *United Christian
Broadcasters*.

●Librarians facing the prospect of
redundancy and unemployment plus
recently retired librarians and those
coming up to retirement.

● The work of the *Evangelical
Alliance* in its new headquarters in
Copenhagen Street, London.

●Our professional association, the
*Chartered Institute of Library and
Information Professionals*, as it
considers its “re-branding” including
a possible change of name.



LIBRARIANS' CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

CHRISTIANS IN LIBRARY, INFORMATION AND ARCHIVE WORK

*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.librarianscf.org.uk*

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SELECTED CONTENTS

04:Margaret Keeling: Life Is Like Riding A Bicycle

06:Louise Manners: Back from Cornwall

20:Charlotte Middleton: Dr. Williams's Library

23:Richard Waller: On Fire? Volunteering With Flame Christian Local Radio

28:Heather Lewis: Am I Just a Librarian? Preparing to Make a Change in Career Path

38:Donald G. Davis, Jr.: Retirement: What Good Is It?

THE FIRST WORD

MARGARET KEELING outlines some principles that are equally applicable in church life, working life, and in the work of our own Fellowship

LIFE IS LIKE RIDING A BICYCLE



Enjoy the summer! Words often spoken as organisations take their summer break. We need time out: to regroup, to relax or even just to concentrate on the small day to day tasks. But, it's also easy to become consumed by the everyday to the exclusion of all else.

At work, at home, within organisations, or in personal lives we all know the tensions in balancing the ongoing and routine with the need to look forward, plan strategically, and keep our eyes firmly fixed on where we are heading

By the time you read this, the church I am part of here in Woodbridge should be back in its newly refurbished and extended buildings. Inevitably the remaining weeks, will be '*consumed*' by doing what is needed to hit the deadline. Enormous amounts of time and energy will go on finalising the details – from colour schemes, chairs, and carpets to the opening services and restarting regular groups. But we recognise

the danger of getting totally caught up in the realisation of this project, for good as it is, it's not actually what we, as a body of Christians, are here for.

Change consumes - time and money, thought and energy. Our professional organisation CILIP is going through a balancing act in defining and communicating its vision of becoming a more relevant and dynamic organisation, at the same time as reacting to the effects of the Comprehensive Spending Review, and meeting ongoing needs of members for briefing, training, and support. As Einstein said, *'Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance you must keep moving'*. As we keep moving from LCF to CLIS, somehow we need to balance the practical implementation of our new vision without losing sight of why we are here.

In work as in church life, we know we need leaders: strategic planners who will dream dreams, and inspire the direction of travel. Usually it's not the same people who take on the less highly regarded tasks of translating vision into action. But neither one is complete without the other. Fortunately, the gifts of the Spirit for Christ's body are shown through helpers and organisers, as well as prophets and miracle workers! (1 Cor. 12 v, 27 **The Message**). Different skills and people, but each one dependent on the other.

As an organisation in the middle of change, we need not only our forward thinkers but also the members who willingly put vision into action - sorting out the admin, creating the forms, planning for the re-launch, taking up new roles. Particular gifts, to meet every need. We are all called to become more: *'intelligent and discerning in knowing Him personally, your eyes focussed and clear so you can see exactly what it is He is calling you to do'* (Ephesians 1 v.17 **The Message**).

Margaret Keeling, BA, MA, MCLIP, PhD, was first elected as President of the *Librarians' Christian Fellowship* at the Annual General Meeting on Saturday 2 April 2011. She worked until her retirement as Head of Services for Libraries, Culture and Adult Community Learning for *Essex County Council*.

THE SECOND WORD

LOUISE MANNERS recounts some saintly legends from the West of England and applauds the work of the *Reading Agency* in promoting reading

BACK FROM CORNWALL

Just returned from Cornwall, including a day trip to the Isles of Scilly, where Cornish saints have proved very interesting. According to legend the Irish Saint Ia, who was of noble birth, journeyed across the sea to St. Ives (Saint Ia's cove) on a little leaf which miraculously turned into a boat. According to legend Saint Warna sailed from Ireland to the Isles of Scilly in a coracle made of hides. She or he lived on Saint Agnes island, one of the currently inhabited islands.

Having volunteered to go on the Work Programme two years I am now a Work Programme completer. The staff at the Work Programme centre are two years older, have learned to speak English and have some basic written English but are still incredibly disorganised. A job seeker arrived just before 2.00 pm for a 2.00 pm appointment with an adviser. At 4.30 pm he was told that his adviser was not there and that she had left sick at 12.00 noon.

I have been very impressed at the *Reading Agency*, a small agency, running *The Six Book Challenge 2013* so successfully. It is a fiction promotion which is easy to promote. When lecturers take it on board, students write book reviews and students encourage one another. It can change lives. It is wonderful when students return books which they have recommended with other students desperate to take the books out.

Louise Manners, *DipLib, MA, MCLIP*, works as a Subject Librarian at the *Ealing, Hammersmith and West London College* and serves as Chair of the *Librarians' Christian Fellowship*.

NEWS

SATURDAY 19 OCTOBER 2013
C.S. LEWIS DAY IN OXFORD



VISIT TO BODLEIAN LIBRARY EXHIBITION

**“MAGICAL BOOKS:
FROM THE MIDDLE AGES TO MIDDLE EARTH”**
from 10.30. a.m.

LUNCH
from 12.00 noon

LIBRARIANS' CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
ANNUAL PUBLIC LECTURE

SPEAKER: Rev. Dr. MICHAEL WARD

**“IMAGINATION, REASON, WILL: A PERSPECTIVE
ON THE LEGACY OF C.S. LEWIS**

**NEW ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH, BONN SQUARE, OXFORD,
OX1 1LQ, from 2.30.p.m**

NEW LOOK AT C.S. LEWIS

2013 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the death of writer and scholar **C.S. Lewis** and members of the *Librarians' Christian Fellowship* will be celebrating Lewis's contribution in their annual public lecture.

This is to be held on **Saturday 19 October 2013** in the **New Road Baptist Church, Bonn Square, Oxford, OX1 1LQ**, from 2.30.p.m. - 4.45.p.m.

Dr. **Michael Ward**, Senior Research Fellow at Blackfriars Hall, *University of Oxford* and author of ***Planet Narnia***, will be the guest speaker. Michael's talk will be entitled *Imagination, Reason, Will: A Perspective on the Legacy of C.S. Lewis*.

The speaker will try to form an overview of Lewis's legacy, focussing not on particular works but on his general approach to the life of the mind and the life of faith. Though he sometimes called himself a "*rationalist*", Lewis also said that the "*imaginative*" side of him was older and more continuously operative than the rational side. The lecture will demonstrate how he brought these two sides of himself together and how he related them to his Christian faith.

Dr. **Michael Ward** read English at Oxford, Theology at Cambridge and has a PhD in Divinity from St. Andrew's. He is the author of ***Planet Narnia: the Seven Heavens in the Imagination of C.S. Lewis*** (Oxford University Press,

2008), which became the subject of a BBC television documentary called ***The Narnia Code***. He is also the co-editor of ***The Cambridge Companion to C.S. Lewis*** (Cambridge University Press, 2010).

Graham Hedges, Secretary of the *Librarians' Christian Fellowship* says "C.S. Lewis is well known as a writer of children's fantasy novels, science fiction, popular theology and as a scholar of English literature. We are pleased to be celebrating his contribution in our forthcoming lecture".

The lecture should be of interest not only to librarians but to others interested in the life and works of C.S. Lewis. Attendance is *not* restricted to librarians and the organisers are looking forward to welcoming a wider audience. Admission is free and there is no need to book in advance.

Further details of the lecture, and the wider work of the *Librarians' Christian Fellowship*, can be obtained from The Secretary, Graham Hedges, 34 Thurlestone Avenue, Ilford, Essex, IG3 9DU. Telephone 020 8599 1310, E mail secretary@librarianscf.org.uk Web site www.librarianscf.org.uk

FROM THE MIDDLE AGES TO MIDDLE EARTH

For those who can get to Oxford in time we are arranging a morning visit to the *Bodleian Library's* current

exhibition, *Magical Books: From the Middle Ages to Middle Earth*, from 10.30.a.m.

This exhibition highlights the work of leading writers of fantasy for children: C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, Susan Cooper, Alan Garner, and Philip Pullman.

The exhibition is displaying a selection of Tolkien's original artwork, for *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, C.S. Lewis's original map of Narnia, and manuscripts of novels and poems from all of the writers in the collection.

Also featured in the exhibition is a selection of books and manuscripts which contain the original myths and legends on which these Oxford-educated writers freely drew for inspiration.

We will assemble outside the entrance to the Library's Exhibition Room in Broad Street, Oxford in time for a 10.30.a.m start, but those who are unable to make this rendezvous can join us later as no tickets are necessary and admission to the exhibition is free.

Those who are unable to join us on 19 October may like to note that the exhibition continues until Sunday 27 October 2013 and that you can obtain information from communications@bodleian.ox.ac.uk

We hope to arrange lunch in a local restaurant for those who require it between the morning *Bodleian* visit and the afternoon public lecture, subject to the availability of a local restaurant willing to accept a group reservation.

There is *no need* to book for

the afternoon lecture but if you would like to join the LCF party for the exhibition visit and/or lunch, please let the Secretary know.

CITY OF DREAMING SPIRES

We trust that Oxford will prove to be an accessible venue for many members and friends of the Fellowship, especially those travelling via London and Birmingham. It is approximately an hour's journey from London Paddington and can be easily reached from Bristol, Coventry, Reading, Swindon and other regional centres.

New Road Baptist Church is conveniently situated in the centre of Oxford. It is a short walking distance from the coach station and ten minutes walk from the railway station. Car travellers may leave their cars in the City's park and ride car parks (ten minute bus service to St. Aldate's).

Further details will be sent nearer the time to those who book for the *Bodleian* visit and/or lunch.

Please help us to make the lecture known, for example by displaying copies of our poster on library and church notice boards, and by encouraging friends and colleagues to attend.

We will be especially pleased to hear from members interested in sponsoring advertisements for the event in the Christian press.

See you in Oxford?.

LIBRARIANS' CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP NEWSLETTER



From The Secretary: Graham Hedges, Hon. FCLIP, MCLIP, 34 Thurlestone Avenue, Ilford, Essex, IG3 9DU. Tel. 020 8599 1310
E-mail secretary@librarianscf.org.uk;
Web site www.librarianscf.org.uk

LEWIS AT THE ABBEY

A Service to dedicate a memorial to **C.S. Lewis** is to be held in *Westminster Abbey* on **Friday 22 November 2013** at 12.00 noon. The service will mark the fiftieth anniversary of the death of the scholar, apologist and writer.

We have ordered a limited number of tickets for the service which will be made available to members and friends of the Fellowship on a "*first come, first served*" basis.

If you would like to join the LCF group in commemorating the life and work of this celebrated Christian author, please send me a

stamped addressed envelope with your request for a ticket or tickets.

It is suggested that after the Service those who do not have to rush away to catch trains etc. may like to have lunch together in *Wesley's Café* in the basement of the nearby *Westminster Central Hall*.

C.L.I.S. IS COMING

Our recent Annual General Meeting adopted a new simplified Constitution for the Fellowship and also approved a forthcoming change of name to *Christians in Library and Information Services* (CLIS). We plan to implement this name change in the new year and our April Conference will be the official launch event for the 'new' association. In the meantime we are attending to such matters as a new logo and letterhead, and a revised publicity leaflet. The executive committee will be grateful for your prayers as we prepare to introduce CLIS to the library profession and Christian community.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Next year's **Annual Conference** will be held on **Saturday 5 April 2014** in the **Chancellor's Room, Hughes Parry Hall, 19-26 Cartwright Gardens, London, WC1** from 10.30.a.m. and our speakers will be

Dr. **Neil Hudson**, Director of the *Imagine* project at the *London Institute for Contemporary Christianity*, and Dr. **Peter Brierley**, formerly Director of the *Christian Research Association* and now working as an independent consultant under the name *Brierley Consultancy*. Please book the date now and plan to join us for the CLIS launch conference.

EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE VISIT

On **Thursday afternoon 22 May 2014** we are arranging a visit to the new headquarters of the Evangelical Alliance at **176 Copenhagen Street, London, N1 OST**, a short distance from King's Cross station.

The visit will be hosted by LCF member **Kim Walker** who will be telling us about her work as the Alliance's Senior Information and Research Officer and introducing us to other members of staff. The afternoon will provide us with an opportunity to learn more about the Alliance's work in uniting evangelical Christians and providing an evangelical viewpoint in the wider Church, the media and society at large.

It is suggested that those who are able to arrive in time will have lunch together in a local restaurant prior to the afternoon visit.

If you would like to join us for the visit and/or lunch, please let me know.

You can find more information about the work of the Evangelical Alliance at www.eauk.org

GLASGOW VISIT

There may still be time to join our Scottish members on a visit to Glasgow on **Saturday 21 September 2013** which will include a visit to the Kelvingrove Museum (details from the web site museums@glasgowlife.org) and a tour of the *Mitchell Library*.

If you are interested, please contact our Scottish regional rep., Anne MacRitchie, 6A Mount Street, Aberdeen, AB25 2RB. Tel. 01224 630430. E mail amacritchie@tiscali.co.uk

BENEATH THE UMBRELLA

This year's *Umbrella* Conference, organised by the *Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals*, was held at the *University of Manchester* between Tuesday 2 – Wednesday 3 July 2013 and attracted several hundred delegates.

From our point of view it was disappointing that we were not allowed to organise our usual *Service of Thanksgiving* this time. CILIP did provide a multi-faith prayer

room and we were encouraged to place a Bible, book of prayers, and LCF leaflets in this room. I visited the room several times during the conference and half expected to find it full of Muslims on prayer mats facing Mecca, but the room was empty on each occasion. My guess is that it was not widely used, if used at all.

I was surprised to be stopped in the exhibition area by a senior member of the CILIP staff, and a loyal supporter of earlier services, and asked what time the Service would be starting!

However, it was good to have a Christian presence in the Conference exhibition this year in the shape of a stand provided by the Christian Book Promotion Trust's *Speaking Volumes* scheme which encourages gifts of Christian books to public, school and other libraries. This year the scheme was also offering to supply books direct to libraries at a generous fifty per cent discount.

The stand was mainly staffed by the *Speaking Volumes* Director, **Paula Renouf**, who engaged with visitors and effectively promoted the scheme.

Paula reports that her presence at the exhibition was an interesting experience. She learned a lot about how libraries work and their interest in Christian books, which was positive in some respects and less so in others. She recorded seventy-seven names and e-mail addresses but spoke to about a hundred delegates all told.

There is unlikely to be another

Umbrella Conference before 2015. No doubt the *Christian Book Promotion Trust* will want to consider whether *Speaking Volumes* should take part again, and our own committee will want to consider whether there are ways in which we can make an impact at this major professional gathering.

You can obtain more information about the work of *Speaking Volumes* from P.O. Box 1070, Cambridge, CB22 4WX. Tel. 07914 301481. E mail info@speakingvolumes.org.uk or from the Web site www.speakingvolumes.org.uk

PRESS CUTTINGS

LCF's recent annual conference *Beyond Librarianship* has attracted some interest from the Christian and librarianship press.

Reports of the conference have appeared in the ***Bulletin of the Association of British Theological and Philosophical Libraries***, June 2013, pp. 24 – 26, and in the ***English Churchman***, 12 & 19 July 2013, p. 9.

An edited version of Professor Donald G. Davis's conference talk *Retirement: What Good Is It?* appears in ***Post-Lib***, the journal of CILIP's *Retired Members' Guild*, July 2013, pp. 2 – 5.

Both of the conference addresses by Heather Lewis and Donald G. Davis, Jr., can be read in full in the current issue of ***Christian***

Librarian.

The June issue of the **Bulletin of ABTAPL** also includes our committee member Mary Barker writing about the LCF/CLIS *Library Aid* programme on pp. 21 – 22.

LCF member Richard Johnson writes about *The Life and Death of a Victorian Periodical* on pp. 6 – 8.

ABTAPL's coming programme of events announced in this issue includes their **Autumn meeting on Thursday afternoon 7 November 2013** at the *William Booth College*, London, and their **Spring Conference** at *Sarum College*, Salisbury, from **3 – 5 April 2014**. Details can be found from <http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/aptapl.html>

PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL NEWS

- Past LCF speaker the Rev. Dr. **Richard Burrige** has become the first non-Roman Catholic to be awarded the *Ratzinger Prize* by the *Joseph Ratzinger - Benedict XVI Vatican Foundation*.

The prize recognises Dr. Burrige's eminence in the field of biblical studies and his contribution to the historical and theological study of the gospels.

Richard Burrige is the Dean of *King's College*, London, and gave LCF's annual public lecture in October 2005 on the theme *Pilgrim's Progress or Space Odyssey?*

- Past LCF speaker **Roy McCloughry** has been appointed part-time National Disability Advisor to the *Archbishops' Council* of the *Church of England*.

Roy McCloughry is a part-time tutor in ethics at *St. John's College*, Nottingham, and a well known speaker and writer on disability and other issues. He gave our annual public lecture in 1986 and spoke at our annual conference in 2003.

- **Death Tonight** (Twin Books, £6.50, ISBN 978-0953430482) is the latest title from librarian turned novelist **John Thomas**.

John's novel imagines the England of the late twenty-first century as a place to be travelled through very quickly without stopping. Human conceptions are re-possessed by the State, lifespans are limited by "usefulness", the Care Bureau reports on everyone and even the television game shows are truly deadly affairs.

You can order **Death Tonight** from <http://www.twinbooks.co.uk>

APPEAL FROM SINGAPORE

The *Overseas Missionary Fellowship* HQ Library/Archive in Singapore is looking for a volunteer who might be available to work on a range of projects lasting several months. The person would need a

background and experience in library/archive work.

The Library contains a modern, well organised, collection of books and journals in a custom-built space with facilities for readers and staff. There is a need for on-going processing and display of materials and the possibility of enhancing the classification and subject indexing of the collection using the existing software system.

The Archive contains a range of documents, books, journals and audio-visual materials which await cataloguing and classifying.

If you are interested in receiving further information about this project please contact our Overseas Secretary, Eleanor Neil, at LCFoverseas@etelligence.info

FAITH IN THE COMMUNITY

Christians in Parliament has recently launched the ***Faith in the Community*** report with support from the *Evangelical Alliance*.

The report provides evidence that, despite a degree of suspicion on the part of some local authorities, churches and other faith groups are playing a major role in providing services to the community in many parts of the country. The Report notes that the services provided include dog training, classes in astronomy and anger management, and the running of local libraries and post offices.]

The *King's Community Centre* in Great Sankey, Warrington, is

briefly mentioned on page eighteen of the report and is an example of a library service taken over and run by a local church. When the *Great Sankey Library* closed in April 2011, the local authority invited local community groups to bid for a Community Asset Transfer. The local *King's Church* won the bid and the *King's Community Centre* duly opened on 5 September 2011.

The Centre is currently open from 10-2 on Mondays to Fridays and offers a book exchange service (though not a full library service) run by volunteers. Free refreshments are offered to visitors and there is also a play area where children can play with toys or look at books. A community hall is available for hire by local groups. You can find more information on the web site www.kingscommunitycentre.co.uk

Placing public library services in the hands of voluntary groups is, of course, a matter of some controversy, but LCF readers may know of other places where something similar has happened. Please let me have details of any similar arrangements known to you.

You can read an executive summary of the ***Faith in the Community*** report, or download a PDF file of the complete report on the *Evangelical Alliance* web site at www.eauk.org

TAMING THE TIGER

Taming the Tiger (Authentic, £6.99, ISBN 078-1860244810), the

award winning and best selling autobiography of evangelist Tony Anthony, has been withdrawn from sale by its publishers following the compilation of a confidential report questioning the validity of some of the claims made in the book.

Taming the Tiger explains how the author, a self styled former martial arts champion, bodyguard, and criminal, became a Christian while serving a prison sentence and later began a new life as an evangelist.

In October 2012, however, the *Evangelical Alliance* received a detailed complaint questioning the truth of some of the statements in Tony Anthony's autobiography, which is said to have sold one and a half million copies around the world.

Following discussions between the Alliance and the trustees of *Avanti Ministries*, Tony Anthony's charity, *Avanti* agreed to set up an independent panel to investigate the allegations in a confidential manner.

The panel, made up of three respected members of the *Evangelical Alliance* Council, reported on 26 June 2013 and concluded, based on the evidence submitted to it, that "*large sections of the book ... which claim to tell the true story of Tony Anthony's life, do not do so*".

Since the submission of the report the publishers of ***Taming the Tiger***, *Authentic Media*, have removed the book from circulation and *Avanti Ministries* have decided to cease their activities.

At the time of writing the *Evangelical Alliance* web site at

www.eauk.org includes a joint statement from the Alliance and *Avanti Ministries* and a questions and answers interview with the Alliance's General Director, Steve Clifford.

For independent comment on the Tony Anthony controversy see Gavin Drake's article *Shaming the Tiger* on the ***Ship of Fools*** web site at www.ship-of-fools.com

BIBLE ON THE BOX

Could the highest rating television programme this Christmas possibly be ... The Bible?

It seems unlikely but this December (exact dates to be confirmed) Channel Five will be bringing us ***The Bible***, a ten hour epic mini-series dramatising the biblical narrative from Genesis to Revelation.

The series has already attracted record viewing figures in the United States, where it was produced, and it has gone on to become a top show in Australia, Canada, Spain and Portugal.

The Christian charity *Damaris Trust* believe that the series could play an important role in bringing the story of the Bible to the United Kingdom. They are calling on churches, organisations and community groups to help make the series a national event – like the Olympics – which everyone will be watching and discussing.

Local churches should be able to make use of the broadcasts for

teaching and evangelism – for example by arranging Bible studies tied into individual episodes.

Damaris hope to launch their own resources web site in the near future where local organisers will be able to register their own materials and activities.

The series has been welcomed by leading Christians including Paula Gooder, Canon Theologian of Birmingham and Guildford cathedrals.

We will have to wait several months to see *The Bible* on our screens but in the meantime we can make a start by buying *A Story of God and All of Us* (Hodder and Stoughton, £16.99, ISBN 978-1444749793, Roma Downey and Mark Burnett's novelisation of the series scripts, for our libraries or for our own personal reading.

Further details from *Damaris Trust* at office@damaris.org

CONTROVERSIAL BOOKS

Every once in a while a religious book will become the subject of controversy and attract the attention of a wider public and media who do not usually show much interest in the finer points of theology.

Fifty years ago the late Bishop of Woolwich, John A.T. Robinson, became a household name as a result of his controversial best-seller *Honest to God* (SCM Press, £12.99, ISBN 978-0334047339). Robinson's conviction that the Church needed to give up its

traditional ways of speaking about God inspired a great deal of argument and comment.

The evangelical publishing scene has had its own controversial best-sellers from time to time. Dave Tomlinson caused a stir with his 1995 book *The Post-Evangelical* (SPCK, ISBN 978-0281048144) which reflected the views of a man who had long been a leader in charismatic and evangelical circles but had become disillusioned with aspects of the evangelical movement.

Respected Baptist preacher Steve Chalke became a figure of some controversy when his book *The Lost Message of Jesus* (Zondervan, £8.99, ISBN 978-0310248828) opened up a new debate about the way in which many evangelicals have traditionally understood the doctrine of the Atonement.

On the other side of the Atlantic, Brian McClaren has ruffled some evangelical feathers with a number of his books. His recent offering *Why Did Jesus, Moses, the Buddha and Mohammed Cross the Road?* (Hodder and Stoughton, £12.99, ISBN 978-1444703672) takes a new look at the way in which Christians should relate to people of other faiths.

His fellow countryman and former mega-church pastor, Rob Bell, has also upset some readers with his book *Love Wins* (Collins, £8.99, ISBN 978-0007465057) which raises questions about traditional evangelical teachings on Heaven and Hell.

POPULAR CULTURE

The theatre. The cinema. The Novel. Radio and Television. Pop and Rock Music.

These are all popular forms of art and entertainment that, in the past, have attracted the disapproval of some evangelical Christians. There was a time when Christians, in certain traditions, refused to go to the cinema or declined to have a television set in their homes. Although there are still Christians who are only too eager to denounce popular culture there is now the opposite problem of Christians thoroughly immersing themselves in the media and entertainment without making any attempt to relate what they see or hear to their Christian faith.

Many local churches give their members little assistance when it comes to assessing the products of popular culture from a Christian point of view. Those who require help in this area will find much useful material in Steve Turner's ***Popcultured: thinking Christianly about style, media and entertainment*** (Inter-Varsity Press, £10.99, ISBN 978-1844749058).

After discussing the prevalence of the media and pop culture in present day society, the author goes on to offer helpful advice on how Christians should respond to television and the movies, fashion, popular journalism, advertising, comedy and computer technology.

Each of the chapters in

Popcultured concludes with a list of questions for reflection or discussion. These could be used as the basis for a series of sermons or discussions in churches, youth groups, Christian Unions and other settings.

Steve Turner is well qualified to offer advice on aspects of popular culture since, for many years, he has earned his living as a music journalist and poet. In his journalistic role he has written books on such artists as Marvin Gaye, The Beatles, Johnny Cash, Cliff Richard and U2. As a poet he has, in recent years, specialised in writing for children and his works are widely read in schools.

CURRENT AWARENESS

- Jo Browning Wroe's *Sticking Faithfully to His Craft* profiles the work of Michael Arditti, whose eight critically acclaimed novels and short story collection deal with the conflict between faith and scepticism.

Arditti's novels feature such characters and situations as a bishop who has lost his faith, an ordinand coming to terms with his sexuality, the members of a Hampstead church experiencing their own Passion during Holy Week, and a young missionary drawn to liberation theology during the Marcos dictatorship.

Philip Pullman, not known for his ecclesiastical sympathies, says

of Arditti's third novel, "*It's a delight to find a modern novel that takes religion – and all the objections to it – seriously as a subject*".

Arditti explains that he took an aesthetic route to faith, As a child he responded to beauty, art, music, words, and the biblical stories. His faith has developed over the years and he cannot conceive of a world without a creative, moral, loving force behind it.

Most of Arditti's novels have an English setting or characters but his latest work ***The Breath of Night*** (Arcadia, £11.99, ISBN 978-0957330450) is set in the Philippines, which he describes as the only Christian country in Asia.

The article appears in the ***Church Times*** for 19 July 2013, p. 21.

- Simon Parke considers the reasons for the enduring popularity of crime fiction and murder mysteries in his article *In the Sitting Room, Wearing Slippers*.

Crime fiction is a comparatively recent literary genre, pioneered by such writers as Edgar Allen Poe and Wilkie Collins but taps into a longer standing interest in gory death. E.L. Doctorow suggests that things that are "*dark, uncertain and confused*" inspire horror in us, but it is a pleasurable horror because we know that we are safe.

The murder mystery genre has attracted many religious versions. The web site www.detecs.org claims that there are two hundred and eighty clergy detectives in print. These include G.K. Chesterton's

Father Brown, Ellis Peters's Brother Cadfael and Peter Tremayne's Sister Fidelma.

Parke has himself contributed to the clerical mystery genre with his recent novel ***A Vicar, Crucified*** (Darton, Longman and Todd, £7.99, ISBN 978-0232529975).

Traditionally there are three elements needed to write a good murder mystery: character, plot, and research. To these we might add a fourth: contemplation. The best stories are contemplations on the human condition, in their social setting.

Crime fiction is a medium that transcends itself and deals with the biggest questions we face: what is life and what is death?

The article appears in the ***Church Times*** for 7 June 2013, pp. 21-22.

- Rachel Mann's article *A Compromised World Like This* considers the current popularity of the television series ***Game of Thrones*** based on the novels of George R.R. Martin.

The series is set in the fantasy world of Westeros and presents various Houses and nobles vying for power. Although the stories include such familiar fantasy elements as dragons, giants, and the undead, the theme at its heart is political intrigue.

The article notes that the series "*is by turns vulgar, moving, offensive, and compelling. Its combination of intrigues, swords, sorcery, and heightened sexuality makes the Borgias look tame*".

For all its fantasy elements

George R.R. Martin's world is very much a product of our times. The gods are mostly useless, everyone is morally and psychologically compromised, and there is no great quest on which heroes can embark.

Despite the apparent lack of a moral centre it would be wrong for Christians to ignore the series. We meet together on Sundays in order to be sent out into a tough world which, in its human complexity, is often not so far removed from the world of ***Game of Thrones***.

The article appears in the ***Church Times*** for 14 June 2013, pp. 15-16.

- Martin Saunders's article *A Throne But No Messiah* points out that ***Game of Thrones*** has become satellite channel *Sky Atlantic's* biggest draw and that Christians ignore the series at the risk of their own irrelevance.

The series is an epic tale of lust for power, wealth, sex and violence in which various noble houses are involved in an ongoing struggle to sit on the ruling Iron Throne of Westeros. Infanticide, murder, maiming and massacre are all part of the plot and hardly anyone is clearly identified as being good or evil.

Some Christian critics of the series have drawn attention to the lack of a recognisable messianic figure in the series. Although he has expressed some degree of appreciation for earlier fantasy writers – such as C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien – George R.R. Martin seems to have rejected their

redemptive approach.

Some readers and viewers, however, may make comparisons with the Old Testament. The various bad kings, battles, massacres, moral lapses and rebellions of the Bible may seem chaotic but woven together they become the grand story of God's rescue plan for the world.

Christians may also have some sympathy with George R.R. Martin's conviction that "*the battle between good and evil is weighed within the individual human heart, not necessarily between an army of people dressed in white and an army of people dressed in black. When I look at the world, I see that most real living breathing human beings are grey*".

The article appears in ***Christianity***, August 2013, pp. 18-19.

EBSCO PUBLISHING

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DR. WILLIAMS'S LIBRARY

**CHARLOTTE MIDDLETON
records a visit to the largest
collection of Non-Conformist
literature in the world.
Additional material by Graham
Hedges**

On 22 May 2013 eleven members and friends of the *Librarians' Christian Fellowship* had the pleasure of visiting the *Dr. William's Library* in Bloomsbury. We were shown round by the Director of the Library, Dr. David Wykes, who also gave us a very interesting and informative talk about the history of the Library and about Dr. Williams himself.

Little is known about Dr. Daniel Williams and what there is is best known by David Wykes who wrote his entry for the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Dr. Williams was born in 1643 at Wrexham, Denbighshire, and became a Presbyterian minister who refused to conform to the Anglican Settlement. In 1664 he became a domestic chaplain to the Countess of Meath in Ireland. In 1687 he fled Dublin, due to the growth of Catholicism, and came to London where he became the leader of London's dissenting ministers, as the previous leadership had been dying off.

He became an important figure in the 1690s and even addressed Queen Anne in 1702 on behalf of the three denominations (Presbyterians, Independents and Baptists).

He wrote his will after a bout of severe illness in 1711, at the height of prejudice against dissenters in Queen Anne's reign when it was feared that the *Toleration Act* would be withdrawn and that dissenters would be banned from teaching their children or ministers. Dr. Williams's will reflected his concern for the education of Non-Conformist ministers. He left his own library and a small amount of money to assist this. Dr. Williams died in 1714.

The original library bequest was dominated by theology but also contained classical French and English Literature, Medicine, Mathematics and Astronomy. The first catalogue was published in 1727 and listed seven thousand five hundred volumes, folios and quartos, and one hundred and twenty seven tracts. The library was opened to the public two years later.

The trustees collected money from dissenters to build the Red Cross Street building, the original location of the library. However, Dr. Williams had made no provision in his will for the expansion of the Library. Trustees had to give £10 to go towards acquisitions and ministers were asked to leave their books to the Library. These were often things that they and their opponents had written.

By the time the Library moved to its present site in 1890, due to the erection of the Metropolitan Line,

the Library had over sixty six thousand volumes, on a much broader variety of topics. The building which the Library currently inhabits was built as a hall of residence in 1848 for students of *University College*, London. The current Reading Room is in the room which housed Dr. Williams's original collection. It is a beautiful room, so lovely, in fact, that several scenes from films and television programmes have been filmed there, among them Stephen Spielberg's ***Young Sherlock Holmes***. The building has seven floors and houses three hundred thousand titles, but it does present some conservation problems.

The Library is the oldest library in the world, open to the public, under its original benefaction. It is also the largest and most important collection of Non-Conformist materials in the world. Since demand from the Library's traditional readership of Non-Conformist ministers is declining, and rival institutions can supply the demand for information about Theology, there is now more interest in the Library's historic collection of pre-nineteenth century material relating to Protestant Non-Conformity in England.

The Library recently set up a research centre for study attached to *Queen Mary's College*, called the *Dr. Williams Centre for Dissent Studies*. They no longer buy current Theology titles because they know they cannot compete with other libraries.

The Library still relies upon the

card catalogue, dating from 1729, the year the Library opened. However, fifteen per cent of the holdings are now listed on the *Heritage* computer catalogue and the Library is looking at various ways of digitising the information available.

Items of special interest held in the Library include the manuscript of George Herbert's poems, the papers of the Puritan divine Richard Baxter, and the letters and correspondence of Joseph Priestley, the discoverer of oxygen.

In 1978 the Library acquired the historic collection of *New College*, Hampstead, when that institution closed. Since 1982, the *Congregational Library*, though owned separately, has also been housed in the *Dr. Williams's* building.

These days the Library is mainly used as a research library. Roughly one third of their users are academics, one third are ministers and one third are general readers and they have roughly two hundred new visitors every year.

It was a wonderful, educational visit, and we would like to thank David Wykes very much for his kindness in allowing us to visit and giving us such an informative tour.

Information about *Dr. Williams's Library* can be obtained from 14 Gordon Square, London, WC1H 0AR. Tel. 020 7387 3727. Web site www.dwlib.co.uk

Charlotte Middleton is a SCONUL trainee working in the library of the *University of Surrey*.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

***News from the Membership Secretary:
Janice Paine, MCLIP, 22 Queensgate Gardens,
396 Upper Richmond Road, Putney, London,
SW15 6JN. Tel. 020 8785 2174***

Listed below are those who have renewed their membership since early June. We would greatly appreciate it if payment could be sent before the end of April. If you have changed address, job or e-mail, please let us know as soon as possible.

LATE RENEWALS

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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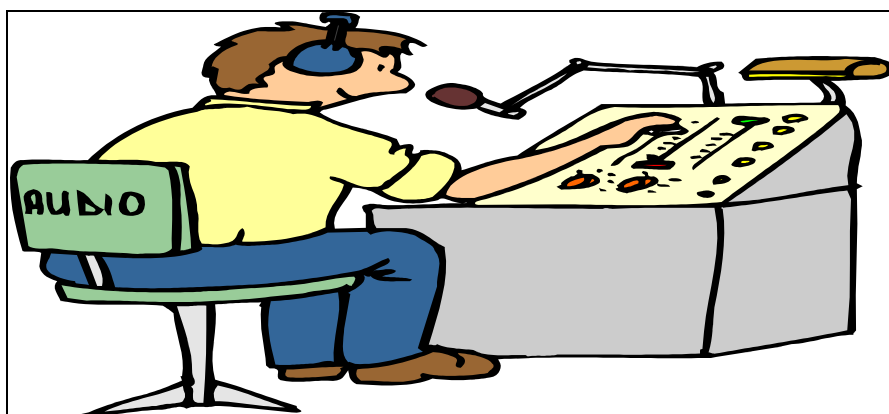
CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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ARTICLES

RICHARD WALLER explains how his thirty seven years in public libraries have been followed by a new unpaid career in local broadcasting

ON FIRE?



VOLUNTEERING WITH FLAME CHRISTIAN LOCAL RADIO

When the first round of cuts hit public libraries the opportunity came up to take voluntary redundancy and tap my pension early without penalty. My job was one of the few that was actually secure, which made interacting with my friends and colleagues interesting as they weren't in this happy position. But I was wondering whether thirty-seven years was enough and three more years of performance management monitoring seemed less than totally attractive. On the other hand, the financial crisis hardly made it look like a good time to abandon job security and take a pay cut!

Then I had an odd experience driving to work one morning. I

am not one of those people who think that God is always speaking to them, but it was as if God addressed me directly. *'Why are you hesitating?'* he seemed to say, *'You have always been interested in missionary radio, and your friends at Flame Radio want you to help them. Go and do it!'*

So I did. The change has been an interesting one. As soon as you say *'Christian Radio'* everyone says *'Premier'* or *'UCB'* or even both, but there are quite a few Christian local MW stations that deserve to be better known and more appreciated and supported by the local churches in their area. Nearly all of them, relying as they do on gifts from local believers, live hand to mouth. Despite this they provide a 24/7 local voice for Christians in their locality. *Flame Radio* has a reliable income of about £36K, it costs £55K to run. This is typical.

At one time not so long ago Christians couldn't get licences to broadcast, they might use the airwaves to propagate sectarian views, but they are now obtainable provided the plan is credible and the support is there. The FM frequencies are full, no-one in broadcasting takes DAB seriously as a long term option, but there is lots of room for low powered local radio services in the MW frequencies and the number is multiplying.

Flame lives in a very anonymous studio in Rock Ferry on the Wirral. We have taken over part of a Church building and converted it into studios and offices. There are no signs outside so that the light fingered are not tempted to break in to steal the array of computers, cables and other electronic equipment. The offices can't be manned twenty-four hours a day and we don't try. If you need to know where the studio is, then you'll be told, otherwise not.

Inside it looks a bit like Heath Robinson meets local radio, everyone had to learn on the job and make themselves experts on the myriad tasks needed to get programmes on air. No money is wasted in making it look pretty or covering things up. Provided it's safe, we leave it as it is. The result is visually striking! Cables run everywhere, equipment sits in every available corner, and the office is Spartan, devoted more to gadgets than people.

Officially *Flame* serves the Wirral and the broadcast power is set for a ten mile radius, which is what our licence says. In practice we can be heard for about twenty miles, from Llandudno across to

Macclesfield and including all of Liverpool, Flintshire and West Cheshire. Under the terms of our licence as a Christian and Community Radio Station, at least eighty per cent of the content must be overtly Christian, the rest should be of community interest. This means a lot of Christian music, a lot of Bible Studies and teaching, Christian comment and magazine shows and children's and young people's programmes. The community side is covered by local history programmes, local events and '*What's on*' type material, but this is less than we would like it to be. There is also a fair bit of light classical music.

Then there's some humour – how to describe '*Pot-pourri*', done by Derek, my long-time friend and the man who got me into all this? I can't, find the station on the web and listen to one! He also spent a life-time in teaching and has a collection of indescribably funny letters written to parents about their children, '*What did you do at school today*' is an experience all by itself.

'*Chat-room*' is really *Flame's* equivalent of the Frost interviews! I got hijacked to talk about libraries for *National Libraries Day* and the result was about fifty minutes of talking about what public libraries could do. Norman, the Station Manager and interviewer (he's really very good at it) is a keen library user, but as with many long-time users, he was actually astonished at the range of services on offer.

Don't believe the smoothness of interviews! Norman had a fit of coughing in the middle, we got diverted onto the subject of trains, a long-time enthusiasm of mine, and there were several miscues, stutters, hesitations and irrelevancies. The one and a quarter hour interview was edited down to the required time by removing all of these and sounds very relaxed and natural! Unless you know what actually happened, of course, and then it sounds odd! Being on the production end does mean that now on TV and radio I can often spot the joins where before it seemed seamless.

Programmes go out 24/7, but scheduled programmes run from 8.00 to 23.00, the night time being randomly selected (by the computer) programmes from a set of suitable material that doesn't date. Carols in July are not really what's wanted, so we restrict free choice! We broadcast on 1521MW with simultaneous webcast on www.flameradio.org.

What do I do apart from being interviewed for 'Chat-room'? I had hoped to do something to promote public libraries, knowing just how hard publicity is to arrange. Even though it would have been free the local libraries weren't interested. I think the rows in Wirral a few years ago that made national headlines have made them cautious about media interaction. Pity though.

My first job, and the biggest one to date, was to edit together the mass of policy documents into a single business plan. Policies and information documents had been produced to meet various needs as they arose while the station was being set up. The result was confusing, contained a lot of redundant repetition, and was absolutely huge. No business plan for a radio station is going to be small and the result wasn't, but at least it was all in one place and in a logical order. A large number of appendices contained all sorts of supporting data, from accounts to health and safety. An interesting job that gave me a good overall view of how *Flame* developed and what it did. The other main job is to back up another long-time friend, David, who manages the schedule. This is a demanding role, as it not only means arranging and publishing the daily schedules, but making sure that the programmes themselves appear at the times they are supposed to. This is more of an art than you might suppose. You may have a fifty-eight minute thirty two second programme to fill a sixty minute slot. Well, it needs to start on time, but how to make sure the next one starts on the hour and not one minute twenty eight seconds early and annoy the listeners? Make a selection from a big range of fillers, Station jingles, promos (a bit longer and promoting things like Bible reading, giving money to support *Flame/Christian Aid/whatever*) or even filling a longer gap with a piece of music of the right length. You need to be careful to be appropriate, Derek cheerfully saying '*Who wrote this rubbish anyway? I don't know, but this is Flame on 1521MW*' is not the right one to follow on a Bible study or a programme on a serious issue. But something serious is not the right note before or after something much lighter. There are currently three hundred and sixty five station jingles to choose from, I think some of the helpers have a hobby of designing them!

You don't have to be in the studio to manage the schedules, there is a secure remote login to allow it to be done from home. But

it does restrict your activities, there are nine slots on the radio playout system (as the programme that controls the broadcasts is called), so you can't be out for very long any day you are doing this. Alternatively you need to borrow a PC from friends or pop in to your local library and use one there.

I am also hoping to start learning to edit recordings to get programmes ready for airing. Before I do this I need a much more modern and bigger PC as recordings are not nice little MP3 tracks, but massive files of anything up to 1GB that need to be reduced to order and then converted to broadcast quality MP3. So that's the next job. And I still haven't quite given up on my idea of a programme to promote public libraries.

I hope this has given you an insight into what goes on in a local Christian radio station and what I am doing. It's very different to life in the public library! Is there a station broadcasting in your area? If so, do you listen to it and/or support it? Most of you are nowhere near our transmitter in south Wirral, but why not try listening to *Flame* on the Web on www.flameradio.org.



Richard M. Waller, BD, is a Vice-President of the *Librarians' Christian Fellowship* and worked for many years in the public library service in the *Metropolitan Borough of Wigan*.

HEATHER LEWIS shares some of her experiences of redundancy and unemployment and suggests ways in which library skills can be used outside the traditional library and information sectors

AM I JUST A LIBRARIAN?

PREPARING TO MAKE A CHANGE IN CAREER PATH

An Address to the Librarians' Christian Fellowship Conference "Beyond Librarianship" held on Saturday 20 April 2013 in the Eadon Hall, Methodist Central Hall, Warwick Lane, Coventry.

Introduction

First of all I want to say that my title is not in any sense meant to be derogatory. When I decided that I needed to explain and apologise for the title "*Am I just a librarian?*" I realised that it could be interpreted in several ways.

Librarians are sometimes the butt of unflattering caricatures. However, within our working environment we ourselves can sometimes underestimate the skills and experience we have gained and that is one of the things I want to explore today.

In addition, none of us is just a librarian even if we work in that field. We all have a varied life outside our work in which we play many roles within our families, our social lives, our churches and other voluntary activities in which we participate.

I intend to look at some of the issues around dealing with redundancy or the need to change job. I hope it might also be useful for anyone wanting to review their work/life balance and future plans. As Christian Librarians we share at least two things in common - our faith and the context in which we work, albeit a very diverse range of roles in a variety of organisations.

We can all challenge ourselves about whether we are where God wants

us to be at any stage in our lives. For those of us fortunate enough to be in a fairly settled environment we need from time to time to reassess what God wants us to do. We may not be pushed by circumstances such as the threat of redundancy or yet another round of re-organisation. However, the things we do and the job role we have may have been right two, five or ten years ago but perhaps we should be asking "*Are we still fulfilling what God has for us to do?*"

I'm really not here to tell you what to do but to highlight some of the things I've learned and you can decide whether they are relevant to you - either for you to emulate or to avoid. Each of us is different so what I have found to work for me may be of no use to you. What I will try to do is to offer you some questions to ask so you can find your own answers.

The context in which we each work will differ from other library and information workers so the skills and experience we have accrued will also be different. Our aspirations and dreams will be different and the wider circumstances of our lives - our personal and social lives and family responsibilities.

Hindsight is a wonderful thing but not always much use. Thinking about possible scenarios, planning ahead and researching in order to be prepared can be more practical. It is difficult to be objective when we are in the middle of a stressful situation such as redundancy. It's worth giving it thought even when it is not imminent and asking ourselves some of the relevant questions.

Questions to consider

Let's start with some quite general questions about ourselves and the place which work has in our lives.

1. How well do you know yourself?
2. What motivates you?
3. What are the essential and desirable elements of your day to day life including employment?
4. What is important about having a job?
5. What are the limits beyond which you are not prepared to go?
6. Is paid work something you intend to do full-time until you retire?
7. Where are you in the overall pattern of your career?

These are not specifically job related questions. They are bigger questions about yourself.

Being a Christian

Before I go any further I would like to set this in the context of our faith. I'm

sure when you have difficulties to face or decisions to make you pray about them. Whether small issues or large we need to know what God wants us to do. I hope that all of you have people with whom you can pray whether within your family or your church or elsewhere. Often it is good to pray with someone outside the context of the decision - so for a work issue, not a work colleague. It is important to be able to see beyond the immediate issue and try to take a big view of the situation. It may be as we consider these issues you are the one who can come alongside someone else in such a situation rather than being the one faced with the decisions.

The context of the change

Let's look briefly at the context in which we need to make these decisions and we'll come back to those questions in a minute. You may be facing redundancy or you may feel you want to get out of the wrong job. (I've done both).

- **Redundancy**

The job is redundant, not you.

Redundancy does have some advantages over choosing to leave a job. Redundancy is often done relatively publicly whereas getting out of the wrong job usually has to be done more discreetly.

There are certain rights which you have if your job is being made redundant. Find out about your rights - take advantage of any advice - redundancy counselling, assessing your skills, CV writing, time to do job searching and attend interviews.

Use all your networks and take support and advice if it's offered to widen your view but don't let someone else make your decisions for you.

- **Getting out of the wrong job**

The job you are doing may have been the right job once but things change, for example, circumstances and expectations - yours and the organisation's. You may decide that you need to take the initiative and reassess your situation and look for something else.

Getting out of the wrong job usually has to be done more discreetly as the decision is likely to be a personal one. You may be wise not to broadcast your intentions if it will be to the detriment of yourself, your colleagues and your ability to do your job in the short term.

Try to read your current position - what are the best and worst case

scenarios? If you can anticipate likely situations you can start to prepare the way for making a move.

So whether redundancy looms or you choose to make a change you need to learn to articulate your strengths in terms which are relevant to the context in which you will be presenting yourself.

Let's go back to those questions:

How well do I know myself?

When I was made redundant in my forties I was offered support in the form of a psychometric assessment. I don't think I knew that's what it was called at the time but I was given a long questionnaire to answer. My answers were analysed and I was presented with results which I discussed with an adviser. They gave me quite a lot of food for thought and formed the basis of my CV which I had always written previously to be read within the library and information world. If I can give you one example which would probably never occurred to me on my own. My adviser said I had a very unusual profile. On the scale of personal ambition my score was quite low. On the scale of wanting success I scored quite highly. From this she concluded that team work was important and, in particular, the success of any project or area of work with which I was involved. Whether I won the prize, as it were, for any achievement was of little importance. This also reflected my management style at the time but it was not something I had previously stopped to think about.

Those of you who are members of CILIP will probably already know about their ***Professional Knowledge and Skills Base*** document.¹ Although this is primarily intended for development within the library profession there is a section on generic skills:

- ❖ Leadership and Advocacy
- ❖ Strategy, Planning and Management
- ❖ Customer Focus, Service Design and Marketing
- ❖ IT and Communication

There are, of course, numerous other assessment tools and psychometric questionnaires which you can use to get a more subjective view of yourself than you would naturally be able to devise on our own. These may analyse your personality type, your skills or your preferences. I have found in various situations, not always in my working environment, that these have been helpful in seeing where I fit in with other members of a team or a group. I have, for example, used the *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*² on a work-related management course as well as in a church environment. We

recently used the *DISC team profiling tool*³ in our church leadership team. If you get the opportunity to use any of these tools or have already done so they can provide useful evidence to add to your profile or CV.

What motivates me?

I learned quite a lot about my motivation when I was made redundant. This is something which changes with circumstances and experience. Trying new things sometimes tells you what you don't like and will seek to avoid in future! Doing familiar things is sometimes necessary when other aspects of your life are demanding or changing.

Just to offer two examples that apply to me: i) I need other people around me and ii) I need deadlines; so team work and project work are both good motivators. If I were looking at a new potential working environment I would want to know:

Would there be people with whom I could share ideas? In my current role, I have an excellent team and I job share with someone who enjoys doing the things I'm not good at!

Is there an end or are there goals set to measure what has been achieved? Although this may not apply to the whole of a job role, having time limited tasks from which I can see an end result and draw a sense of achievement is a motivating factor.

What are the essential and desirable elements of my day to day life including employment?

Is your geographical location important, unimportant or essential? How far are you willing to travel or move to get the right job? What scope does that give you?

After I was made redundant, I had several local short-term and part-time jobs. After a few months I found a full-time permanent position or to be exact I was actually headhunted which was quite flattering at a time when my morale was quite low. However, this turned out not to be the right job for me long term and eventually, after just over two years, I decided to leave even without another full-time permanent job to go to. It was this job that had taken me right away from librarianship, something I might not have been brave enough to do without being pushed. It also taught me a lot about what was important to me, what I enjoyed and what I was prepared to tolerate. Being in the wrong job is not always an entirely negative experience.

One of my criteria was that I wanted to stay local which was one of the bonuses of the job I described there. However, it had significantly reduced

the number of jobs for which I had been willing to apply. It was a choice I was determined to stick with as the length of my day and the amount of time and energy I had to do other things in the evening and at weekends was important. It also meant that I could sometimes curtail the length of my day by starting later or finishing earlier. My personal reasons for that are not important to discuss here but they are things which each of you would need to consider for yourself.

What is important to me about having a job?

For some people, paid work gives them a good structured routine to their day and week and year. Not all jobs are like that and maybe your experience of library and information work has included long days, late evenings and weekend working. Do you mind work dominating your time so that you have to decline social invitations or opportunities to do voluntary work or attend clubs or other meetings?

For some working from home is an attractive option. I have never considered it as such and there are lots of reasons for and against it which are worth considering and listing in your own circumstances and talking to others about their experience.

For me, as I've already said, interaction with people is very important so working on my own is not an attractive option.

A friend of mine was made redundant a couple of years ago and said what she missed, and it seemed a really genuine concern, was that her opinion mattered. She had become an expert. People came to her for advice and information. They respected her opinion. Redundancy took this away. Don't underestimate the impact in all sorts of ways of being separated from a role which you have developed, maybe over many years.

For many people earning money is obviously a great motivation for having and keeping a paid job. Recognising what is well rewarded in the job market may be something you need to explore. When I was in library management I was involved in evaluating pay grades and I knew at that time what needed to be in a job description to gain points in that process. Criteria change and I'm no longer in that field. That is certainly an area to explore if the amount you need or want to earn is a priority. It may enable you to couch your CV in terms which are regarded as valuable by a prospective employer.

What are the limits beyond which I was not prepared to go?

In the area I live, north of London, I set myself a fifteen mile radius, but only West, North and East as going fifteen miles south would take me into the

London area with all the attendant travel stress. I had commuted into and across London for a couple of years earlier in my career which had been fine at the time but not something I wanted to do again. It came in the category of *"trying something new and not wanting to do it again"*. Roads were busier, trains more expensive and less reliable and I no longer lived at an easy walking distance from the railway station.

When considering the limits you set for yourself it is also important to have in mind a pay rate below which you are not prepared to go. This would need to take into account the costs involved or savings made with length and type of journey, parking and the like.

Is paid work something I intended to do full-time until I retire?

When I was younger rules about local government pensions and retirement were more generous than they are now. Some of you may remember the eighty five year rule. When your age plus the length of service added up to eighty five you could apply for your pension. So if you started working aged eighteen and had a continuous record you could consider retiring at fifty one or fifty two although this was at the discretion of the employer. An opportunity like this might open up all sorts of possibilities for voluntary unpaid work or at least dropping the need to earn further down your priority list.

Where am I now in the overall pattern of my career?

When, about four years ago, I applied for the job I now have, which incidentally I have enjoyed much more than I anticipated, I knew that this was probably the last significant job move I would make. I had already started, as I saw it, to practice being retired when I dropped my working hours from thirty seven to thirty which gave me an extra day off each week. I came to my current job on twenty five hours but within a year the hours were increased to full-time which was not what I had in mind, so I offered to job share and dropped to half-time when my job share partner was appointed.

I recognised when I started in the post that it was not something I would have considered doing when I was younger. My reason for this was that I thought life experience was a great asset working in a prison environment. Conversely a naïve attitude can be quite dangerous. I now think for a different reason that it is a good thing I didn't get into the job earlier. It is in many ways like going back a generation and I am quickly losing touch with some aspects of librarianship which are central to many people's day to day work. For example, none of the inmates we serve in the library have access to the Internet. Use of computers is strictly monitored and for many very

limited or non-existent. Many people could not imagine looking things up in a book rather than turning to the Internet for answers but if our users are to do their own research it has to be hardcopy which in some areas is becoming hard to source and very expensive.

So I would say, if you are trying to build a career and a future working life, beware of eccentric environments where you can easily get out of touch whether within the library world or not.

Practical steps

If you are looking for ways you can transfer the skills and experience you have acquired to other areas of work, here are some suggestions for practical steps you can take:

- Define your skills, and therefore the potential job opportunities, widely.
- Be honest but positive. Have someone who knows you well work with you if you can.
- Include skills and experience acquired in all parts of your life, not just your paid work.
- Adapt your library skills - Try writing your CV without using the word "*library*".
- Use your contacts. Network in all parts of your life - family, social and church as well as work.
- For anyone seriously considering a change of career I recommend careercomp@niononline_4 which may help you either to focus in if you have lots of ideas or broaden your view if you need more ideas.
- Use the resources within the profession.

Looking at some LCF literature, for example, the range of work in which members are engaged includes

public libraries
academic libraries
school libraries
commercial companies
law firms
healthcare
the voluntary sector
government departments.

There are also members who are students, lecturers and

bookshop workers. So here is a range of experience and environments some of which you may not have considered. Some of these people will have developed an expertise in a specialist field which would allow them to move out of the library while staying within the organisation.

At the *Umbrella* conference in July 2013⁵, one of the key themes was "*Future Skills and Future Roles: What will society need from our profession?*" Things move and change very quickly and developing the understanding and flexibility to move with the changes can be vital.

Read! While I've been preparing for today, without looking particularly hard I've come across several useful articles in recent sources. Here are a few brief quotes from an article by Bethan_Ruddock in *Update* June 2012⁶....

..."look beyond the job titles"
..."know what skills you have"
..."the person who is reading your application or interviewing you
might not have any ideas what a librarian does"
...experience doesn't all come from the workplace"

An article by Laura Williams⁷ from a recent *CILIP eBulletin* included some good advice:

- **Structure** - One of the hardest things about not having a job is often the lack of structure and routine. I found it easiest to treat job hunting like a regular nine to five job with a lunch hour.
- **Flexibility** – To succeed in finding a job, readjustment of your plans might be required. ...You may not need to compromise but I recommend thinking about what area you would be willing to compromise on.
- **Positivity** – Positivity is required to survive unemployment. ... Volunteer to gain new skills or take up a new hobby ... Anything that helps give back a little self-worth will help in the job hunt. Remember that you never know what is just around the corner.

I had a particular example of "*you never know what is just around the corner*": How many of you when looking for a job as a librarian would go to a general high street recruitment agency? On one occasion, when I had just finished a temporary job and was out of work, I walked from my home into the main street in Hemel Hempstead. I was usually in too much of a hurry to walk and would drive to the town and rush round on my way to somewhere

else. That day I walked round the corner into the shopping centre and on the front door of a recruitment agency it said "*Wanted: Qualified Librarian*" and I landed another temporary job setting up a library for a big international IT company whose European HQ was in Hemel and I didn't even know it was there.

I'm sure some of you will remember John Wickenden speaking at this conference last year or perhaps you read his address in ***Christian Librarian***⁸ It was entitled "*God's purpose driven librarian*" and I'd just like to quote from it to finish: "*I want you to understand how to discover God's purpose for you in your job, how to be content and positive in your job, how to be yourself in your job, and how to let God change your environment and look for opportunities for change and development.*"

Wherever you are, working or not in paid work, it is where God has placed you and He has a purpose for you there.

Sources:

1. *Your Professional Knowledge and Skills Base: identify gaps and maximise opportunities along your career path*; at www.cilip.org.uk/pksb.
2. Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). For an explanation go to www.myersbriggs.org/my-mbti-personality-type/mbti-basics/
3. DISC team profiling tool. For information about this and other tools for job matching and working relationships go to www.axiomsoftware.com/
4. Careercomp@nion online: the UK's independent and impartial gateway to careers related information on the Internet. For information go to www.careercompanion.co.uk
5. Umbrella conference in July 2013⁵. For more information including the conference programme go to <http://www.cilip.org.uk/umbrella2013/Pages/default.aspx>
6. "*Looking a bit further to find that job*" by Bethan Ruddock in ***CILIP Update*** June 2012, page 21
7. Laura Williams' article can be found at <http://theatregrad.wordpress.com/2013/02/18/unemployed-librarian/>
8. John Wickenden's article in ***Christian Librarian***, Autumn 2012, page 39-44.

Heather Lewis, MCLIP, has been employed in library and information work for most of her career. Following redundancy in her forties she explored fields of work outside librarianship before becoming a prison librarian in 2009. Outside of part-time paid work her interests revolve around church life and music and practising to be retired by spending time with a wide circle of friends and drinking coffee..

Professor DONALD G. DAVIS, Jr. recalls his career, both before and after retirement. He suggests that retirement is a time when satisfying avocations can become fruitful new vocations. If we have no or few useful pursuits beyond our professional work, we will likely struggle more with retirement

RETIREMENT

WHAT GOOD IS IT?

An Address to the Librarians' Christian Fellowship Conference "Beyond Librarianship" held on Saturday 20 April 2013 in the Eadon Hall, Methodist Central Hall, Warwick Lane, Coventry.

When I meet friends and colleagues, I can predict with a great deal of certainty that they will ask one of two questions: "*How are you doing (spending your time) in retirement?*" or, "*What are you working on now?*" The first, a question usually asked by the general public, suggests a broad concern or curiosity about how one who was fully engaged in a variety of productive endeavors is continuing or changing his behaviour. The second, usually asked by an academic colleague, suggests that research and writing should be the norm for scholars to the end of life. The first question tries to discover an attitude or a perspective one may have about living life after formally retiring from a career ladder job. The second assumes productivity of a special academic nature. I have to confess that I usually try to answer the first question, no matter which one is asked, though I can give what may sound as a feeble answer to the second question. The dilemma of responding to these two queries has made me reflect on the nature of retirement—and, in particular, on my own retirement from a successful career in my field and a variety of interests that complements it but concerned about using my talents for God's glory. Thus, retirement: What good is it? And for what? And for whom?

The world likely divides into those who look forward to enjoying retirement and those who do not. Reasons will vary for each response according to social and economic expectations, physical and mental health,

and vocational and spiritual vision. Retirement is certainly a comparatively recent option for many reasons that social thinkers have reminded us. In the 1880's in Germany and later elsewhere, progressive social states began to support care of the aged. Until the later nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, when labour unions and governments embraced the concept, most people simply worked until they could do so no longer. Some believe that our modern system of retirement, old-age pensioners, social security recipients, etc. was (according to R.C. Sproul) "*conjured up by somebody who wanted to make room for other people to get a job.*" Especially during the Great Depression of the 1930's, this idea seemed attractive. However and for whatever reasons, we are now caught up in the system that prevails in most of the progressive democracies.

But having said that and understanding the socio-economic pattern, let us remember also that retirement is not really a biblical concept. Levites who are Temple priests were to retire at fifty, mentor younger priests, or go back to their farms, according to Leviticus 8:25. The relatively short working life of a Levite, combined with life expectancy at that time, meant that family and clan would provide what else was needed. But the Bible does talk about preparing for future years, caring for one's family, being able to share with others in need, etc.—a point not missed, at least in the USA, by Christian estate planners and financial advisors. We'll have to leave that topic there for today. A lot more could be said.

The major issue with "retirement" in progressive countries is the none too subtle contrast between the world's common conception and the faithful Christian's understanding. Is it, and should it be, a time of leisure, pleasure, and relaxation—or a time of more time and opportunity to use one's gifts for the glory of God and the benefit of others? This is a greater and more complex issue than many of us are willing to recognise. Following World War II, at least in America, the real estate developers, the dream marketers, and financial advisors began to sell the idea of retirement as a worthy, if not the most important, goal in one's life. As young adults, we are subject to many credible influences, opinions of friends and family, challenges of the workplace and church community, lures of advertising and wild dreams. However, in the end, it is *contentment*—having enough to live the life that pleases God—that is the priceless virtue that the Scriptures, Old and New Testaments, support.

You see, we don't even realise how many times we have been tempted to succumb to the pressures that surround us. The slick marketing of consumer-oriented, creature comforts, total security, unbounded pleasure, etc. has been done very skillfully in the USA, and I suspect in the UK and elsewhere. It is all too easy to dream of doing, being, experiencing all those things that our society says characterises virtually all successful people. And who can possibly not want this? It is a matter of entitlement. Retirement can offer that avenue, escape, or excuse that can seem so natural, so expected—

and so deserved.

Now I grant you, if one has life pretty well tied up in one's vocation, profession, public persona, then retirement is particularly difficult to contemplate with much joy. You may not be important enough to take that anticipated victory lap of appreciation. (Those outdated introduction cards do not go over very well.) In fact, many are reluctant to consider retirement because they have given little thought to what they would do with themselves. They really cannot conceive of doing anything else beyond their current jobs. They may find the thought of changing longstanding routines painful. (And remember, spending more time with one's spouse is not always as idyllic as some would dream about!) The descriptive title under our name on our office door or institutional stationery means a lot to us, as does the business card or homepage with my name on it. Some of us cannot bear to leave that behind or even accept significant modification. But it can be done. We just don't have much of another fulfilling life beyond the workplace. But the time will come when we will have to discover one, or we will simply fade away.

It is my belief that in retirement, one's enjoyable avocations and unrequited passions become new, modified, or expanded vocations and causes. If you have not discovered or maintained a life beyond the workplace—the library, the classroom, the office, etc.—then you will have little incentive to accept retirement gracefully and productively. So, it is not too early to find those activities and ministries that give you pleasure before retirement, so that you can develop them later. (Someone has said that God's will is often found where the world's needs and one's gifts and abilities coincide.) Where one can serve with joy and pleasure takes some time to discover, so all the more reason to get started! Persons who are wholly and single mindedly committed to their job may get the job done, but they are not preparing themselves for later years. They may receive the gold star for utter commitment from some, but they are not necessarily heroes to me.

So, as the aging process creeps or gallops along, as the realism of retirement sets in, as the counsel with family and friends goes on, and on—remember the new, creative ministries that await. We should at least be as creative about how to live our lives productively in retirement as we did when we were working full time. With an adequate income and minimal creature necessities assured, you are now free to do what you were meant to do in a new way. Now you can devote more and flexible time, and maybe even more energy, to those endeavours that give you pleasure and serve God's purpose in the world—to redeem it and its people to give the Almighty praise. For many of us, our retirement will indeed reflect the kind of gifts that we brought to the library and information profession and the knowledge and skills that we developed—not the worst contribution one could make! But let's face it. Few of our lives will turn out to be exactly what we expected, despite all the counseling and self-improvement programmes we absorb. Some of our lives may change dramatically. Think of it as being a twenty-something again with

your life ahead of you. Only now, you know yourself better than you did then. You know what your gifts and limitations are. And you also know that you may have a few good years left!

To be sure, take some time off, enjoy some trips and holidays, sample some of those activities that give you pleasure and benefit others. And don't hesitate to slow down as needed, but to stay engaged with others in supporting communities of spiritual nurture and avenues for outreach. Networks developed over a lifetime are still valuable connections for retirement; so we should seek to nurture our colleagues. Some of us, instead of expanding our involvement with groups of various kinds, will need to be willing, without regret, to modify our commitments. In the end, we will want to find opportunities where we can faithfully minister the grace of God to others for their benefit, while receiving that same grace to sustain ourselves.

Your programme planners suggested that I close with some autobiographical reflections, so let me do that, hoping that this won't bore you this afternoon before tea time.

Two weeks before World War II began in Europe, I was born thirty miles from where I now live in Austin, Texas. When I was two and a half, my family moved to southern California, where I grew up and attended college. My father was a Baptist pastor all his life and often supplemented his income with part time jobs. My mother was what is now called "*a stay at home mom*" who ultimately bore five children of which I am the eldest. Because of his chaplaincy in the War, the GI Bill for education, and a small legacy my mother received, we spent one and a half years in Edinburgh (1948-1949) as he pursued his doctorate in church history, one of the first in that wave of Americans to do so. This was a formative period in my life. Skipping my childhood and adolescence—which you would find truly fascinating, I'm sure—I graduated from UCLA with a degree in history. Then followed rapidly a M.A. in history, the M.L.S. in librarianship from *University of California, Berkeley*, and four years at the state university in Fresno, California, where I was reference librarian and head of Special Collections. From 1968 to 1971, I was a doctoral student at the *University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*. There I met my late wife Avis, also a graduate student there, and our first daughter was born; a son and another daughter came along after we moved to Austin. They are now scattered from Baltimore to Grand Junction CO, with the nearest in Fort Worth. During 1980-1981, the family enjoyed a year in Britain when I was an exchange lecturer in Birmingham library school and affiliated with this group.

My career at the University of Texas spanned thirty-five years as I moved up through the academic ranks. The usual spheres of teaching, research, and service suited me well as I pursued my passionate interests: primarily book and library history, but also reference work and bibliography, and, collection development and management. Probably three thousand or so students passed through my classes, each of whom heard my brief faith

journey story and each was invited to our home for dinner or dessert, and caught a glimpse of what practicing Christians were like. I was blessed to receive several noteworthy recognition awards, to produce a score of books, including reference works, bibliographies, a monograph, collected essays, and conference proceedings—in addition to numerous articles and book reviews. In addition to dozens of professional trips abroad and lecturing in ten foreign countries, my most noteworthy opportunity and joy was to edit the *Journal of Library History* which became *Libraries & Culture*, published by *University of Texas Press* from 1976 to 2006, perhaps the high point of its nearly fifty-year history. This position brought together my academic interests, my editorial and organisational skill, and my excitement about networking with editorial board members, potential authors, reviewers, etc. I retired fully in 2006.

Why am I telling you all this? I feel a little like St. Paul in Philippians 3, when I say that in retirement much of the prestige and recognition I enjoyed has gone. Paul didn't say it was easy either, though it was rubbish compared to his life in Christ. However, he cared enough about it to remember and list his achievements, and I, too, savour those things that were meaningful to me. We can lay these things down as a sacrifice at the feet of Christ, as Paul did. Though I still enjoy reviewing books, writing essays, reading drafts of manuscripts, there is renewed joy of continuing work of Kingdom ministry. That previous life of integrating Christian witness and my professional pursuits is not wasted and has morphed into doing more of what I did as an avocational pursuit before. What I did in discretionary time then, I can do more intentionally now. And now that I am single again and in good health, my schedule is more flexible to follow the call. There are three primary ministry opportunities in my life at present. All of them have their origin in what I was and did already in the workplace or while I was employed full-time.

The first is a ministry to faculty members at universities in my part of Texas. Well before coming to Texas in 1971, I was convinced that we are not placed in positions of influence randomly, but are called to an appointment to be light and salt—and maybe a little hot sauce, as well. Thus, I was part of a group that became known as the *Christian Faculty Network* at the University. For thirty five years and on into retirement, I was an integral part of this small group that represented the principle that Christians should unite for fellowship and outreach in groups, wherever they are situated. I now itinerate in southwest Texas through Faculty Ministry of *InterVarsity Christian Fellowship* alongside a colleague from Faculty Commons of *Campus Crusade*, a similar organisation. We visit campuses in the Austin, Houston, and San Antonio regions—praying to challenge individuals, to stimulate a desire for visible groups, and to identify potential leaders. I've been able to write some challenging essays and Bible studies for these faculty and staff folk.

The second is as a lay pastor, certified by Mission Presbytery of the PC(USA) to preach in churches without a pastor or as a pulpit supply. I

began this after graduating from a local seminary and completing an additional two-year course for laypersons. Since 2004 I have preached over a hundred times in congregations of from less than ten to one hundred and fifty or so, mostly in central Texas. Playing the piano helps, as well. For two years I was commissioned to help a new church development in a city thirty miles away. I have drawn on my Bible study background, teaching experience, and social skills to help me in sharing God's Word with those who need to hear it. Meanwhile, there is a lot of study and prayer in the preparation that enriches in my own spiritual life.

Third, though previously a deacon and an elder in my local Presbyterian (Reformed) church, in retirement I have been able to spend more time caring for those in special need.

This has taken two forms. First, since I am not squeamish about bored, anxious, sick, and dying people, I have agreed to do hospital and hospice visitation on Sunday afternoons, when the regular pastors are tired out. I am excited to bring the Gospel of hope to these folk and their families. Sunday is a great time to meet families at their loved ones' bedside. My wife having died a year and half ago from recurring ovarian cancer, I can stay and comfort the dying and the living to the end. When visiting the sick and dying, I am doing Christ's work. Second, because of my own need and the people who are alone in my circle of acquaintances, I have reached out to men and women who are alone, especially through loss of a spouse through death or divorce—or both. I sometimes quote James 1:27 about true religion being “*to look after orphans and widows in their distress . . .*” which I take to be any who need special support and encouragement. My own journey of transforming grief to gratitude and guilt to grace has brought me many ways of expressing hope and cheer to others—and provided many of good times I could not have imagined.

So, for me there is a continuing of previous endeavors into retirement. Being single again as a widower, I need things to do that utilise the gifts and experience that I have. Since I thrive on relationships with others in community, life is seldom dull. And there is a lifetime of networking that ripples through much of my life yet. Thus, I need to carve out times during the week for reading and quiet times. There are new configurations in my life as I strive to give and receive God's grace wherever I am.

As I prepared these remarks in mid-March 2013, I received a message for a prominent Chinese library historian who is director of the *Sun-Yat-Sen (Zhong Shan) University Library* and senior professor in the information school located in Guang Zhou, People's Republic of China, where I have lectured on several occasions. We have spent much time together in segments over the years in China, Paris and the USA. He tells me that the recent book on the history of libraries, to which I wrote the introduction, is the subject of a panel discussion in which he is participating. He earnestly wants to know whether, now that Avis is gone, if I am interested in teaching in the

information school there. Could God really be opening a door and beckoning an elder statesman in his field to return, if only for a few weeks?

“Retirement—What Good is It?” Lived prayerfully, purposefully, and productively—retirement can be God’s gift to us if we can receive it with open hands. It can be good if we continue to use our callings for the Kingdom of God—now, with more time, energy, and resources. We may not be drawing an employer’s paycheck, but we still seek ways to follow the Great Commandments—to love God wholly and to love our neighbors fully. The life of faith does not end until our journey is complete when we join that forever family.

I wonder, what does God have in store for you in the challenge of retirement? I wonder what will be your response?

Prof. **Donald G. Davis, Jr.**, *BA, MA, MLIS, MATS, PhD*, has been Professor Emeritus of Library History at the School of Information and Department of History, *University of Texas at Austin*, USA, since 2005.

After various appointments in libraries Donald joined the Texas faculty in 1971, teaching courses in professional foundations, book and library history, collection development and publishing. He has also taught in the UK at the Department of Librarianship at the former *Birmingham Polytechnic*.

Donald Davis has been an active participant in professional and scholarly societies since the mid-1960s and has been awarded many honours by relevant organisations. From 1977 to 2005 he edited the journal ***Libraries and Culture*** and he has written and edited many books, articles and book reviews. A festschrift in his honour ***Libraries and Culture: Historical Essays*** was published by the *Library of Congress* in 2006.

Donald is a Life Vice-President of the *Librarians’ Christian Fellowship* and a Past President of the (American) *Fellowship of Christian Librarians and Information Specialists*.