

# BULLETIN

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## BULLETIN 2014

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***Bulletin of the Association of British Theological and  
Philosophical Libraries***

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**CONTENTS**

William Booth College Library – A Personal Perspective	2
St Bede Library: Its History & Mission	4
The Most Extraordinary Ancestral Enquiry Ever? Or The Strange Case Of Jack The Ripper And Spurgeon’s College	8
Can You Help? - American Civil War Letters	12
Social Media In Libraries	13
The Library Of Birmingham	16
Christian Librarians Moving Forward	19
Notice of Meetings	20
News	20
Websites	21

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The front cover shows a view of the outside of the Library of Birmingham

## **WILLIAM BOOTH COLLEGE LIBRARY – A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE**

by Winette Field

William Booth College's remit is to offer training, or educational, opportunities to Salvation Army Officers, employees and those studying to be officers. This is done via residential and distance learning modes of study as long, short and day courses. Open learning is also available to anyone wishing to pursue biblical study.

The Library supports some of these people. In addition, there is a role in providing denominationally distinctive materials, to complement other collections, for those undertaking further study at other colleges or universities.

Many of the services and facilities which larger institutions have can be found in this Library service: OPAC, self-issue services, e-resources, plus the regular book, periodical and dissertation collections. The on-site stock is supplemented by a collection held at the Salvation Army's International College for Officers & Centre for Spiritual Life Development in Sydenham. Both collections can be searched using the same union catalogue.

In common with many institutions, partnerships exist to provide courses and students have access to online resources provided under those individual contracts. For those studying to be officers this is particularly beneficial when looking at multidisciplinary topics.

It is quite a complex mix. The fulltime students vary with some being in their 20's while others are older. Some are single, but a fair number of married couples study to be officers at the same time. Secular experience differs too as do educational qualifications. Thus a few train to be officers whilst undertaking MA level studies with other institutions. All this brings its own challenges, and joys, and no given day is the same.

As a college community we are based on Christian principles. Hospitality is one of our value statements "providing an environment where everyone is welcomed and where friendliness, quality care, compassion and service are our hallmarks." From a Librarian's perspective this translates to how potential users are handled as I balance what can be offered against the size of the facility, levels of staffing, partnership and contractual obligations.

So what is unique about this facility?

1. It has been refurbished. The furniture was purchased from SEROTA Library Furniture.
2. It uses Citrix based network services.
3. Internal social media tools are used to facilitate provision.
4. It has links with overseas Salvation Army colleges.
5. It is the only Salvation Army training college library in the UK.

The photograph below shows the refurbished Library in its early days. As the stock, study space, computers, copier/ printer and easy reading area are all in one room some thought has been given on the minimisation of noise. To this end summer 2013 saw some reconfiguration of the study desks.



The new arrangement seems to be working well. Users have their back to the entrance and 4 study spaces have been relocated to the far end of the area. Student feedback is positive and anecdotal feedback says that the space is well used in the evenings.

The college, designed by Giles Gilbert Scott and completed in 1932 is fortunate to house The Salvation Army International Heritage Centre. This is a wonderful resource for students as they take their Church History modules or seek to connect with the social justice of the past.

Administratively it is separate to the William Booth College, but is located on the third floor of the main building. The Heritage Library and Museum are open to all, Tuesday – Friday, however if specific archives are sought prior notification is advised. The team have just launched an online catalogue:

<http://www.calmview.eu/SalvationArmy/CalmView/Default.aspx?>

It was a pleasure to host the ABTAPL autumn meeting. Thank you to all who have supported me in my work here and offered advice over the years.

*W.E. Field BA (Hons) MCLIP  
Librarian, William Booth College*

## **ST BEDE LIBRARY: ITS HISTORY & MISSION**

By James Leachman

St Bede Library serves the students and faculty of the Benedictine Study & Arts Centre and the *Institutum Liturgicum in Anglia et Cambria*.

### **History of the Benedictine Study and Arts Centre and Liturgy Institute.**

The Benedictine Study and Arts Centre is housed at “Overton House”, an elegant red-brick, neo-gothic property built by John M. Bartholomew, son of the founder of John Bartholomew and Son, the map-maker. The engraved name of "J.M. Bartholomew" can be seen in some carved stones in the walls of the garden. The property was purchased by Downside Abbey in 1930 and sold to Ealing Abbey upon its independence in 1955.

Abbot Francis Rossiter first proposed the idea of a Study Centre to the monastic community in 1986 and Abbot Laurence Soper eventually opened it in 1992. The present Abbot, Martin Shipperlee, has continued his support since his election in 2000. The Centre’s work, which is endorsed and supported by the Archdiocese of Westminster, has developed and now provides a programme of adult education in Theology and Religious Studies. The studies pursued focus on Sacred Liturgy and the Liberal Arts, including theology and both modern and classical languages. The Latin summer school has become a regular feature of the annual programme. The volunteer staff are vocationally motivated and trained to deliver adult education professionally.

The 2007 research project “Appreciating the Liturgy” is based on the principles of the 2003 papal encyclical *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*. It is founded and directed by Dom James Leachman, a monk of Ealing Abbey and Dom Daniel McCarthy, a monk of St. Benedict's Abbey in Atchison, Kansas, and the UK arm has been housed since 2009 in the “Scriptorium” at the Centre. In that year Fr Ephrem Carr OSB, president of the Pontifical Institute of Liturgy, suggested that the project be extended to include graduate liturgy taught in English in the UK. Validation was granted by KU Leuven and the first courses were offered and taught in 2011 at the newly inaugurated *Institutum Liturgicum*, now endorsed by the Bishops’ Conferences of England and Wales and of Belgium.

## **Building of the St Bede Library collection**

The Benedictine Study and Arts Centre library was the first to be established and is the foundation collection. It contains volumes on Theology and Religious Studies at access and undergraduate levels and its contents are based on a collection assembled in Durham, Oxford, London and Rome from 1965 to 1992. This collection is regularly supplemented by purchases and selected donations. There are two other collections covering graduate studies in Theology and Sacred Liturgy. Both of these have been supplemented by purchase and generous gifts, in particular by a recent donation of books on Eastern Liturgies from Fr Ephrem Carr, O.S.B.

The collection that constitutes the St Bede Library and serves the Benedictine Study & Arts Centre and the *Institutum Liturgicum* was first begun in 1961 as the personal library of James Leachman and then focused on religion and natural history. It grew gradually while James was studying Biology at undergraduate level in Durham and then Theology at Oxford (1965-1972). It was put in storage and weeded while James was a monk at Nashdom Abbey (1977-1985) and began to grow again when he moved to Ealing Abbey in 1985. In 1992 the Theology collection was moved to Overton House when the Benedictine Study and Arts Centre was inaugurated. Margaret Shea was librarian from 1992 to 1997, succeeded by Josette Wilmott from 1997 to her death in 2005. In 2010 the Graduate Liturgy section of the library was started when the *Institutum Liturgicum* was opened. James transferred many of his personal liturgical holdings, and the whole, renamed “St Bede Library”, was established to serve all the students and staff.

Fr Daniel McCarthy O.S.B. has also donated books, loaned contributions to the Scriptorium (S3) and loaned some periodicals, notably *Worship* and USCCB *Liturgy Newsletter*.

Fr Ephrem Carr OSB has generously donated a significant contribution to the Oriental Liturgical collection in the Graduate section (Room S1) on his retirement as *professor ordinarius* and President of the Pontifical Institute of Liturgy, Rome.

Prof Basilius Groen of the University of Graz has donated a number of Oriental liturgical books.

## Organization of St Bede Library

The library occupies 6 rooms of various sizes in Overton House, 74 Castlebar Road, Ealing, London W5 2DD.

**Ground floor:** Room G1: Main room, Undergraduate Theology, Religious Studies and Languages

Room G5: Anglican Collection, mostly donated by Canon and Mrs Banister of St Albans and by the Alcuin Club. This room also contains published and unpublished Masters, Licence and Doctoral theses and the beginnings of a Psychology section

**Mezzanine Floor:** Room S1: Graduate Liturgy. Dictionaries, Contemporary liturgical books in Latin, English, Dutch, French, German & Italian. Historical liturgical volumes from East and West. Liturgical books and studies on the seven Oriental churches are housed here together with about 80 volumes of the *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina* on medium-term loan from St Michael's Abbey, Farnborough in Hampshire.

Room S2: Periodicals and Series. Fr Daniel's periodicals and series have been integrated into this permanent collection.

Room S3: The Scriptorium, formerly used by Fr Bernard Orchard, OSB for Scriptural Studies from 2003 to 2009, is now used both as a small teaching room and is home to a collection on loan from Fr Daniel McCarthy OSB developed since he began post-graduate studies at the Pontifical Institute of Liturgy, Sant'Anselmo, Rome in 1999. This collection specializes in primary sources of liturgy and tools for research. Commentaries are primarily in English but there are also studies written in other European languages. Fr Daniel's interest in the Latin language is also evident in the holdings.

Room S4: A special collection of books on liturgical architecture, art and iconography on loan from Fr Daniel McCarthy.

### Recent organization and development of the collection:

It was in 2011 when Fr. James Leachman, Fr. Daniel McCarthy and Sr. Rebecca Abel began discussing the possibility of organizing the collection. A classification system and electronic catalogue were decided upon and in 2012. Fr. James Leachman, obtained funding for the purchase of the *ResourceMate* catalogue program and necessary computer equipment needed to provide an electronic catalogue and online OPAC for staff and student access. In the summer of 2013 Sr. Rebecca Abel OSB, and Melody Mazuk, academic librarians experienced in both the Dewey Decimal and



Library of Congress classification systems were asked to begin the process of organizing and cataloguing the collections. A WIFI system was purchased and provided the connections to the internet. Sr. Rebecca Abel along with Melody Mazuk set up the *ResourceMate* program and began cataloguing the graduate collection according to the LC (Library of Congress) system. This system was chosen because of the expansive nature of the LC classification with a highly defined specialized collection, Liturgy. The BSAC undergraduate collection that had previously been catalogued in Dewey continued in the same system. The ability of the electronic catalogue to specify location made this double system conceivable. The *Web OPAC* module allows the catalogue to be searchable anywhere, anytime.

### **What makes the St Bede Library so special?**

The St Bede Library strives to be a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Library. The theme of the BETH (Bibliothèques Européennes de Théologie) Library Conference held in Paris, September 2013 was “*Tradition, Modernity and the Future of Theological Libraries*”. The presentation “*Religious libraries in danger in Europe?*” included reports from various European countries noting the dangerous situation found in some libraries. Carol Reekie reported on some of the religious libraries that were being dispersed in England. Anja Emmerick reported on *Libraries in danger: an overview of the Protestant libraries in Germany*. Other reports from Scandinavia, Italy, France and Finland gave a picture of the serious issue of the dissolving and dispersing of religious libraries across the continent. If there is to be a future for theological libraries, then the St. Bede Library exemplifies the possibility for the continuation of Theological Libraries.

### **St Bede Library’s Mission**

At St Bede Library we are committed to collection development, organization, and making available scholarly theological books. Donations to the library from noted scholars and religious houses have been accepted and preserved. Researchers and scholars will find St. Bede Library a haven for scholarship. We intend to add sections on Music and Psychology to serve students and staff as new developments at Ealing Abbey take shape in the coming years. We are investing in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century!

*Fr. James Leachman*  
*Acting Librarian, St Bede Library*

## **THE MOST EXTRAORDINARY ANCESTRAL ENQUIRY EVER? OR THE STRANGE CASE OF JACK THE RIPPER AND SPURGEON'S COLLEGE**

By Judy Powles

The question has to be asked – has Jack the Ripper ever featured in the ABTAPL Bulletin? This may well be a first. A recent archival enquiry turned out to be the most peculiar I have ever encountered in my 29 years on the staff of Spurgeon's College. A brief enquiry asking about a former student, John George Gibson, was emailed to the College and then passed to me as normal. I did the usual search which showed that he was in College from 1879 to 1881 having come from Edinburgh. His first church was in St Andrews but he then headed to California in 1888. His last church was in San Francisco until 1898 when, according to the record card, he resigned because of poor health. His date of death was given as 25<sup>th</sup> October 1912. In order to check the name of his church in San Francisco as the handwriting on the original record card was hard to read I turned to Google. However the Google search "John George Gibson San Francisco" produced this "Jack the Ripper: A Suspect Guide - Pastor John George Gibson" at [http://www.casebook.org/ripper\\_media/book\\_reviews/non-fiction/cjmorley/66.html](http://www.casebook.org/ripper_media/book_reviews/non-fiction/cjmorley/66.html). This was somewhat surprising to put it mildly.

I found there had been 2 horrific murders (2 women both badly mutilated, with one body found in the church's library and the other in the tower) at Emmanuel Baptist Church in the Mission District of San Francisco in 1895 while John G. Gibson had been pastor there. A Sunday School teacher in the church, a medical student, Theodore Durrant, had been accused, convicted and executed, although Durrant always professed his innocence

The accused's defence lawyer had tried to suggest that the pastor, our man, was actually the culprit as he had access to all parts of the building, was known to spend hours by himself in the church and, more importantly, had been seen to be acting strangely. This led a modern author, Robert Graysmith, a long time reporter for the San Francisco Chronicle, to put forward the surmise that Pastor Gibson had not only murdered the 2 women in the San Francisco church but he was actually Jack the Ripper.

With detailed drawings and diagrams, Graysmith in his book, *The Bell Tower: The Case of Jack the Ripper Finally Solved... in San Francisco*<sup>1</sup>,

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Graysmith, *The Bell Tower: The Case of Jack the Ripper Finally Solved... in San Francisco* (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, 1999)

argues that only Gibson had the time and knowledge of the labyrinthine San Francisco church with the required keys to kill the two women and it could not have been Durrant who committed the murders. Graysmith states that, according to the San Francisco News, Gibson had confessed on his deathbed to a man called Charlie Floyd, in the spring of 1912, that it was he, not Theodore Durrant, who had murdered Blanch Lamont and Minnie Williams. More than this Graysmith also alleges that “Pastor Jack”, who, Graysmith claimed, bore a strong resemblance to one of the police sketches of the Ripper, had resigned from his church in Scotland in 1887 and was in London during the Ripper murders before leaving suddenly just after the last “canonical” killing. The book tries to draw contrasts between the San Francisco and London murders

However it is clear that Graysmith’s case is extremely flimsy to put it mildly. Although the whereabouts of Gibson after resigning his church in Scotland in 1887 and arriving in California in 1888 is unknown, there was and is absolutely no evidence that Gibson was in London at the time of the Ripper murders nor was there any evidence that he was responsible for the San Francisco killings. Indeed it seems that the person to whom Gibson had supposedly confessed, Charlie Floyd, never actually existed and appears to be a mixture of several different people. The victims in the church were not prostitutes and there was no sign of the careful mutilation as happened with the London killings, nor did the perpetrator boast to the authorities of the crime.

Indeed on a website called *The Top Ten Stupidest/Weirdest theories about Jack the Ripper*<sup>2</sup> Robert Graysmith’s case for Pastor Gibson is number 7 in the list. Also reviews of Graysmith’s book are hardly enthusiastic about his theory.

Nevertheless it has to be said that Durrant still professed his innocence on the scaffold and, although Gibson was never investigated as a suspect, it appears that the scandal had a severe effect on his health and almost certainly his reputation. This would explain the “Resigned because of ill-health” on our record card. The College had no further information about him but I found a photograph of his gravestone in Chico Cemetery, California on the internet. This gave his date of death as 25<sup>th</sup> October 1912 which matched that on our record card. It also confirmed his date of birth as being 14<sup>th</sup> August 1857 in Edinburgh.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://swallowingthecamel.wordpress.com/2013/11/10/top-10-stupidestweirdest-jack-the-ripper-theories/>

Concerning the Emmanuel Baptist Church itself I have not found any firm evidence as to what happened to it. All I could discover was that its name was changed to Mission Baptist Church and that there was a fire (possibly arson) at some point by 1910 which had badly damaged it. By December 1912 the *San Francisco Call* was printing an article describing how “the pastor<sup>3</sup> and directors of the old Emmanuel Baptist Church in Bartlett Street had set to work to obliterate everything about the structure which tends to recall the terrible crime enacted within its walls”.<sup>4</sup> The steeple was going to be torn down and the whole frontage totally remodelled.

As for the original enquiry, after discovering this unusual twist in my knowledge of the history of our former student, I decided that I needed to ask the enquirer for what purpose he needed the information about Pastor Gibson before I passed on the few details we had. I never had a reply. Perhaps another book is in the pipeline.....

If anyone is interested in finding out more, there are further books on the murders by authors such as Virginia McConnell<sup>5</sup>, Charles F. Adams<sup>6</sup> and Dorothy Dunbar<sup>7</sup> and literally dozens of websites which refer to the case, including verbatim reports of the trial of Theodore Durrant which became a cause celebre.

*Judith Powles*  
*Librarian, Spurgeon's College*

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<sup>3</sup> Revd James A. Sutherland

<sup>4</sup> *San Francisco Call*. Vol.113, number 21, 21 December 1912. <http://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc?a=d&d=SFC19121221.2.62>

<sup>5</sup> Virginia A. McConnell, *Sympathy for the Devil: The Emmanuel Baptist Murders of Old San Francisco*. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2005).

<sup>6</sup> Charles F. Adams, *Murder By the Bay: Historic Homicide In and About the City of San Francisco*. (New York: Quill Driver Books/Word Dancer, 2004).

<sup>7</sup> Dorothy Dunbar, *Blood in the Parlor* (NY: A.S. Barnes, 1964).



J.G. Gibson from the albums of student photographs kept at Spurgeon's College



J.G. Gibson's Grave, Chico California

## **Can you help? - American Civil War Letters**

Amongst the ABTAPL archives is a three volume collection of letters compiled by Peter John Bilbrough dated 1977. The photocopied letters were written by British men serving in both the Union and Confederate armies and relate to the struggles of fighting a war overseas and the difficulties that they encountered. It is a fascinating historical account of these men's lives. Over 150,000 Irish and 50,000 British men served in these armies during the American Civil War (1861-1865). They included 29 Irish generals and a further 15 from England, 16 from Scotland and 1 from Wales.

Whilst this is an interesting collection, I am not sure that the ABTAPL archive is the best place for it. Mr Bilbrough has obviously spent many years gathering the letters and it is a great pity that the collection is hidden away in our archives. I have had a very quick look through the archive papers but have not been able to find any documentation relating to the donation or its condition of acceptance. If anyone is able to enlighten me I would be very glad to hear from you.

Yours in hope.  
Carol Reekie  
Hon. Secretary, ABTAPL  
Federation Librarian,  
Cambridge Theological Federation  
cr248@cam.ac.uk

# **SOCIAL MEDIA IN LIBRARIES**

By Michael Gale

An ABTAPL workshop held at Oxford University IT Services Centre on the 27<sup>th</sup> February 2014, led by Liz McCarthy, Social Media Officer at the Bodleian Library, and Steve Eyre, IT Services, Oxford University.

## **Introduction**

As someone who has not hitherto used social media for either personal or professional purposes, I came to the workshop open minded but sceptical about their usefulness in the context of our library service. I came with some particular questions in my mind:

- What's wrong with email?
- Isn't social media all very time consuming?
- How can I control information about the library?

The workshop provided a mix of teaching, reflection, and discussion on a wide range of issues around social media which went some way towards addressing these and other questions. The group was small enough for the discussion to be genuinely interactive, and one of the features of the workshop was the opportunity for participants to contribute from their own experience. Indeed questions were as likely to be addressed to fellow delegates as to the workshop leaders.

## **Session 1**

In the opening session Liz McCarthy outlined some of the management issues around social media, including the importance of knowing your users, identifying your goals, and monitoring performance – in other words, the usual good practice, but in the context of a service which has some distinctive characteristics. One of the things that I picked up from this part of the session was the importance of setting a limit to the investment (in time and energy) which I am prepared to make in the service. By doing so I can address my concern about it becoming too time consuming.

In this session we were also introduced to a wide range of social media tools, some of which are well known (Facebook, Twitter), others of which may be less so (Pinterest, Foursquare). Liz suggested three potential library applications: providing service updates, promoting services, and inviting feedback. My sense from the discussion was that while email lends itself to

official communication – everyone is on email – social media may be more appropriate for less formal, or less essential, information, which users may choose to receive rather than have thrust upon them. For some user groups, it may also be a quicker way of communicating – users of social media tend to check in more often than they check their email.

## **Session 2**

In the second session Steve Eyre reflected on the role of social media in the context of the wider online environment. He argued strongly that social media should not be seen as the poor relation of institutional and personal websites. Rather they are interdependent. Shared public platforms such as Facebook and Twitter often generate the ideas which feed into more formal platforms, keeping them fresh and interesting. He also looked at some of the benefits of social media, such as gaining wider professional exposure, and being tuned in to career development opportunities; and at how some of the potential pitfalls can be offset. Steve's main role is teaching online presence to postgraduates, and this was reflected in his presentation, but there was much for librarians, too, including the suggestion that we keep an "impact file" – making a note of ideas encountered via social media which subsequently lead to specific service developments or policies.

### **Twitter and Facebook**

After lunch Liz and Steve looked in more detail at Twitter and Facebook: the nuts and bolts of how to set them up, and what you can and cannot do. I found the session on Facebook reassuring, in particular the option to mediate others' posts, or to restrict them altogether. This addressed my concern about control. I also gained a sense that something fairly simple could be offered fairly easily, without a huge investment of time and energy.

### **Hands on**

In the final session we all viewed a wide variety of libraries which are using social media, and were invited to identify examples which inspired us and others which did not. The look and feel of the University of Glasgow library Facebook page was widely admired, and again it encouraged my belief that something quite simple could be modestly effective. I was also interested in the potential of a tool such as Pinterest to promote new books, given the general availability of book cover images.



## Conclusion

I remain to be convinced that social media has something significant to offer to my own particular library. But I am persuaded that the best way of finding out will be to set something up, and that that can be done quite easily.

My intention is therefore to find out which of the major social media tools are currently being used by library members, and to set up a library presence for the purpose of informal communication about library services. Most social media tools generate a wide range of metrics, so it should be possible to measure use – if not impact – quite easily. If it generates a positive response, all well and good. If it doesn't, I will have learned from the experience.

*Michael Gale*  
*Librarian, Queen's Foundation*

Elizabeth McCarthy's presentation is available at  
<http://www.slideshare.net/lizrosegallagher/libraries-social-media-32656664>.  
and is linked from the ABTAPL website...

Steve Eyre's presentation is available on the ABTAPL website...

<http://www.abtapl.org.uk/activities.html>

## **THE LIBRARY OF BIRMINGHAM**

By Jayne Downey

On a cold, crisp day in December, Alan Linfield, Judy Powles and I were shown round the new Library of Birmingham by Demco Interiors, who, with Carillion plc, fitted out the interior of the library and the foyer area of the Repertory Theatre. It was a fascinating insight into the vision and attention to detail which went into the design of this impressive building - not to mention just what £188 million will get you these days.

The new library took 10 years to plan and build and the first thing that strikes you is just how impressive it is from an architectural point of view. The outside of the building is truly stunning with it's tiered floors encased in lattice rings: black for Birmingham's industrial heritage and silver representing the city's jewellery quarter.

Inside, there is an overwhelming sense of space and light with views from the lower floors up into the central rotunda. Neon-lit travelators and a glass lift take you from floor to floor and there are stunning views over the city through the lattice work and from the outdoor gardens and top-floor observation room. In fact, it's sometimes difficult to remember you are inside Europe's largest public library; on some floors the library shelves almost get lost in the space. Initially, the library expects to welcome approximately 10,000 visitors a day and it did sometimes seem to be more of a tourist attraction than a working library but this will probably change over time.



We started our tour on the ground floor and walked down to the children's library, passing the 'story steps' designed for use by visiting schools. The children's library also has moveable seating and shelving, for flexibility and to allow the area to connect to the amphitheatre which is a circular outside performance space. Passers-by can also look down into the amphitheatre from Centenary Square outside the library, giving the library another link with the city. On every floor, there

are examples of the incredible attention to detail and craftsmanship demanded by the designers, Mecanoo. The easy chairs on the ground floor, for example, are called "take a line for a walk" after the pattern made by their stitching and the "egg chairs" (shown) in the children's library are specifically designed to cocoon an adult and two children for stories. (We tried them out, naturally!) The bespoke shelving follows the curved contours of the walls and is also very high in places, to fill the space. The designers were aware that many of the shelves and desks will be viewed by people looking down into the library so the wood veneer is extremely precise, especially round the central rotunda. All the shelves are galvanised metal with a lacquer finish which makes them look and sound like plastic.

As you progress up the floors of the building, it starts to look and feel more like a traditional library, with books of shelves arranged around the central spaces. The feeling of light and space continues, thanks in part to the dark ceilings and light floors, but the meeting rooms and training suites give way to study spaces. While the open plan design continues, there are more desks to work at, most of which were occupied when we visited. The design details continue to impress, however. The internet desks around the walls on floor 2 ('Knowledge') are floating benches supported by the mullions not the floor and the blinds are automatically controlled but only go down to head height so as not to obscure the view. Floor 3 ('Discovery') is quieter but some noise does filter up through the rotunda; the only really quiet space is the Wolfson Centre for Archival Research on floor 4, which houses the local history collection. This is situated behind glass walls and is a haven from the activity in the rest of the building.

There are two outside garden spaces - the Discovery Terrace on floor 3 and the Secret Garden on floor 7 - both of which offer lovely views over the city and a close up of the cranes used to clean the windows (a technological marvel in themselves). The planting on the Discovery Terrace includes herbs, fruit and vegetables while the Secret Garden has a more secluded feel and would be a great place to sit and read a book or have lunch (although maybe on a warmer day). By far the best place to sit and enjoy the view, however, is on one of the sofas in the Skyline Viewpoint on floor 9 (in the circular 'roof' of the building). In total contrast, floor 9 also houses the Shakespeare Memorial Room, designed in 1882 for the city's Victorian library. This once housed the city's Shakespeare collection and is panelled with glass fronted shelves with carvings, marquetry and metalwork representing birds, flowers and foliage. It was transferred 'as was' from the old Central Library.

One thing that is noticeably absent from the library is a traditional issue and returns desk situated at the entrance. In fact the information and self-service stations are dotted about on all floors and library staff are mostly mobile, wearing high-vis jackets so they can be easily identified. The staff areas that are visible are incredibly neat and tidy; presumably the piles of books and paperwork found in most library offices are kept out of public view on floors 5, 6 and 8.

My overall impression of the Birmingham Library was one of space and light and incredible attention to detail. I'm not sure that all the design features quite work (the interactive media tables on the Discovery floor are fun to play with but I wonder about their practical uses) and it does sometimes feel as though the books are of secondary importance to the overall design of the building, but it represents an amazing vision and extraordinary commitment in a time when other authorities are closing libraries and staffing existing ones with volunteers. It is also more than a library; it is a true 'shared space' housing the Birmingham Repertory, conference facilities, art exhibitions, meeting rooms, cafes and a shop. Perhaps, as the marketing information says, it really does "rewrite the book".

*Jayne Downey*  
*Librarian, Sarum College*



Judy and Alan trying out the chairs on the lower ground floor

## CHRISTIAN LIBRARIANS MOVING FORWARD

Christians in Library and Information Services (CLIS) is the new name for the Librarians' Christian Fellowship from January 2014. Graham Hedges, Secretary of the organisation explains, "*Our new name reflects the diverse working environments in which our members now find themselves, not all of which are adequately described by the traditional term 'libraries'. We are keen to recruit Christians who work in libraries of all kinds but we are also interested in attracting members who would describe themselves in other ways, for example as information officers, knowledge managers or archivists*".



CLIS will be officially re-launching itself under its new name at its annual conference "Moving Forward" on Saturday 5 April 2014 in the Chancellor's Room, Hughes Parry Hall, London. The guest speakers will be Dr. Neil Hudson, Director of the *Imagine* project at the *London Institute for Contemporary Christianity*, on "*Losing the Plot But Trusting the Author*" and Dr. Peter Brierley, of *Brierley Consultancy*, on "*Resourcing Leaders for Better Decision Making*".

As part of the re-launch, CLIS is announcing an appeal for donations towards books and equipment for the *Chaima Christian Institute Library* in the South Sudan, where the Principal, Canon Patricia Wick, is a mission partner with the *Church Mission Society*.

Originally founded in 1976 as the Librarians' Christian Fellowship, CLIS is an association of Christians from many different denominations and a wide variety of library and information backgrounds. Members join together to consider professional issues from the standpoint of the Christian faith and to provide a Christian voice within their chosen professions. There are also opportunities for members to make their training and professional skills available to Christian organisations running libraries. Activities include regular conferences and lectures, visits, e-mail newsletters, and a quarterly journal *Christian Librarian*.

Further details can be obtained from The Secretary, Graham Hedges, 34 Thurlestone Avenue, Ilford, Essex, IG3 9DU. Telephone 020 8599 1310, E mail [secretary@christianlis.org.uk](mailto:secretary@christianlis.org.uk) Web site [www.christianlis.org.uk](http://www.christianlis.org.uk)

## NOTICE OF MEETINGS

### **2014 ABTAPL SPRING CONFERENCE & AGM**

3 - 5 April 2014  
Sarum College, Salisbury

### **2014 ABTAPL AUTUMN MEETING**

tba

### **2015 ABTAPL SPRING CONFERENCE & AGM**

26-28 March 2015  
Westminster College, Cambridge

Further information will be distributed via the ABTAPL discussion list

<http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/abtapl.html>

## NEWS

Inspired by some of the libraries in this Bulletin? Check out the Guardian's 'Stunning libraries from around the world' at <http://www.theguardian.com/books/gallery/2014/mar/24/libraries-around-world-pictures>

Upcoming events from the Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History:

26 April 2014 - Oxford-Manchester Methodist Studies Seminar, Harcourt Hill Campus (BG26)

20 May 2014 - John Wesley Lecture, Lincoln College (Professor Dick Watson of Durham University will be speaking on 'Poetry and Piety: John Wesley and Hymns')

25 - 27 June 2014 - *George Whitefield at 300* conference, Pembroke College <http://www.mwrc.ac.uk/whitefield-conference/>

## **WEBSITES**

ABTAPL

<http://www.abtapl.org.uk/>

ATLA

<http://www.atla.com>

ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials

<http://www.ebscohost.com/academic/atla-religion-database-with-atlaserials>

BETH

<http://www.beth.be>

Christians in Library and Information Services

[www.christianlis.org.uk](http://www.christianlis.org.uk)

Demco

<http://demcointeriors.co.uk/>

Library of Birmingham

<http://www.libraryofbirmingham.com/>

St Bede Library

<http://stbedelibrary.org/>

Salvation Army International Heritage Centre

<http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/uki/heritage>