



Letter from the Chairman

Dear Member,

The Library's AGM is on the 6th November. The formal notice of meeting is on page 5 of this Newsletter. Copies of the accounts for the year to 31st March 2014 are on the website (www.bromleyhouse.org) and printed copies are available in the library or, if you ask a member of staff, can be posted to you at home. I hope you come to the AGM but in the knowledge that most members will not, I am writing this letter as a general update.

The financial results

The library's income from activities in the year was basically the same as last year (£107,220 compared with £106,267) but our income was lower (£80,139 compared with £88,104) because of a reduction in one of the shop rentals. Our expenditure was slightly higher than last year (£181,927 compared with £177,651) leaving us with a surplus this year of £5,432 compared with £16,720 last year. Although membership numbers were higher this year than last (1271 compared with 1221), we decided to increase subscriptions in April 2014 (after two years at the same level) so as to budget for a surplus in the current year.

The 200th Anniversary Development Campaign and the Garden Wing

During the year the Garden Wing was refurbished at an overall cost of £103,368, including furniture and fitting out and the new carpet in the Standfast Room. With generous support of many members the Appeal fund, at 31st March, had received £63,602 and commitments of a further £34,000. The Appeal remains open and I have recently written to members who joined after it was launched in April 2013, asking them to contribute.

I hope you will agree that the Garden Wing has enhanced the Library and I would like, on behalf of all members, to thank those who have given generously, both financially and with gifts of furniture (including the University of Nottingham for the shelving, tables and chairs of the new Reading Room) and time (especially of the many volunteers who moved books, erected the book shelving, cleaned up after the builders or organised fund raising events).

The aim of the Development Campaign is to secure the future of our library into its third century of continuous operation. The Board's plan is to provide passenger lift access to the library floors and to repair/ renew the building's 260 year old roof so removing the risk of further rainwater damage and allow us to fully use the attic floor.

These are major and expensive endeavours and while we will seek support from grant giving bodies, we hope for further contributions to the Appeal Fund. Members who put our April 2013 request for help aside and who would like to contribute now, will be most welcome.

Legacy receipt

Many members will remember Bryan and Janet Churm and know that they both died recently, Bryan in August 2013 and Janet on the 15th March this year. They were members for many years and good friends and supporters of the Library, particularly with regard to book conservation, being very keen members of our NADFAS group of volunteers. Shortly before her death Janet gave a large collection of local studies books to Bromley House Library.

We have recently been informed Mrs Churm made the library, with other charities, a residuary beneficiary of her will. A substantial sum is likely to be passed to the library. If this comes about it offers the opportunity for the library to pursue a number of its aims, including those of the Development Campaign objectives.

We have occasionally been in receipt of small legacies - and recently published a leaflet advising members on the procedure for making gifts by will - and have welcomed members' generosity. When Mrs Churm's legacy is received I will provide further details and suggest ways that we can record her generosity for future generations.

Generally

The library's finances are in good shape. We have no borrowings, and own our building. The library operation flourishes and continues to attract people to join. Additional members will allow us to increase our offering to members, so I encourage you to introduce your friends to the library. We will keep our subscription "affordable" but that means we need to seek financial support elsewhere to meet our development objectives.

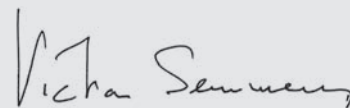
The library's success depends on its staff, and a growing number of volunteers. Recent building work has not made running the library easy. We owe special thanks to staff and volunteers for their efforts over the last year and, indeed, to members for accepting some inconvenience on occasion.

Directors

Chris Jagger who joined the Board in 2010 has decided to retire as a director at this AGM as his commitments outside the Library no longer allow him to provide time to the affairs of the Board. His knowledge and experience of property matters will be missed and our debt to him for his help with the development of the Garden Wing is large. He remains a member and I suspect we will turn to him for help from time to time.

The directors retiring this year by rotation are Susan Greenaway and Peter Hoare and being eligible will offer themselves for re-election.

Yours,



Victor Semmens
Chairman of the Library trustees

Seeking a volunteer project manager

When reviewing the Garden Wing project we decided that in future projects we would seek a (preferably volunteer) project manager to plan and oversee the works. This is not included in a librarians' training! So if a member has past professional experience of planning and overseeing building works and if he/she would be willing to act as our project manager for this scheme, please contact Carol to discuss. This will enable staff to focus on maintaining our services to members.

UNESCO - City of Literature bid

It is appropriate that the library should participate in literary activities in the City and be seen by local writers, publishers, theatres etc. as a resource and contributor to Nottingham's thriving and vibrant contemporary scene.

Our president, the playwright Stephen Lowe, has a huge pride in Nottingham's literary heritage and current activity, and suggested that as part of the library's 200th anniversary in 2016 we should find a way of celebrating that heritage.

We commissioned a review by Pippa Hennessy who proposed the bid for UNESCO to name Nottingham as one of its Cities of Literature. The bid was formally launched in Bromley House Library on the 1st May.

A stand-alone Not for Profit Company has been established to organise the bid and lead partners include the city council, both universities, Nottingham Writers Studio, Bromley House Library, the county council, the Creative Quarter and Asian Arts Council. Financing of the bid is in place as we write with generous offers of support from Arts Council England, Nottingham City Council and the universities.

At the same time, the library has been investigating whether we have a role to play in supporting the education programmes directed at improving adult and child literacy. We have run a pilot creative writing event for students and in July hosted one of the First Story award evenings. Over the coming months, we hope to develop our strategy, find funding sources and encourage members to take part.

We hope by the end of the year to report progress and invite participation.

Christmas Raffle

It is very nearly Christmas Party time again and we would like to continue the new tradition of raffling a Christmas Hamper made up by our members. Any contributions of delicious Christmas food or beverages would be most welcome. Just have a word at the counter if you are not sure what to bring in. Thinking further ahead to next year's events, we have had some fantastic 'STAR' raffle prizes donated by local businesses during the past couple of years so if there is any member has ideas for the future prizes just have a word with us or email enquiries@bromleyhouse.org.

Newcastle Chambers

Newcastle Chambers belongs to Nottingham City Council and is the Victorian 2/3 story buildings backing on to the south boundary of our garden, just beyond our outbuildings. The buildings are in a very dilapidated state and the council has decided to sell them, initially intending to offer them at an auction in August.

When you have been landlocked for 200 years, the opportunity to acquire extra land cannot be ignored. The library could use extra space. We could have an efficient book store, relieving the main building, and avoiding the eventual need to have a remote store. It might also give us a level access to the back of the building for disabled access to our planned lift.

And finally, if we can generate our literacy and other ideas, it would give us space for children to congregate, leaving the library rooms free, and fulfil the demand for meeting rooms that we have.

BUT clearly we can't jump into this without careful review and funding. So bidding at an early auction would be impossible. Additionally, we would not need all of Newcastle Chambers.

The chambers also adjoin our neighbouring charity, the Malt Cross Music Hall. We have been in discussion with the Malt Cross management and it is clear that both organisations have uses for parts of the chambers. We see the possibility of a joint venture to restore and use the chambers. There are also other areas where we can work together to mutual advantage. We are actively exploring this and looking at funding possibilities.

Our first priority is to request the council to hold the property back from auction to give us time to develop the ideas and seek the necessary grant funding. So watch this space.

Staff news

Nicola Rae has been awarded a residency in Fine Art at Nottingham University, starting in January 2015.

This is a great opportunity to work in a studio on University premises, with access to facilities such as kilns, printing presses, and a digital editing suite, together with technician support.

It does mean she will no longer be a 'Monday person', as she needs to be 'in residence' on that day to be available for the Fine Art students. She will be swapping to a different day to confuse everybody! Well done Nicola.

Sherlock Holmes: the man who never lived and will never die



We are planning a trip to the Sherlock Holmes exhibition on Thursday 12th March 2015. It will cost £25.00 per person, which includes travel to and from London and entrance to the exhibition.

We are going by coach and leaving Bromley House at 8.15am, aiming to arrive around 11.45am, and leaving London at 4.30pm to arrive back in Nottingham at about 8.00pm. Entrance to the exhibition is timed and we will be going in at 12.00pm. You will then have the remainder of the afternoon to yourself.

The exhibition explores the legacy of Arthur Conan Doyle's most famous creation as well as recreating Victorian London through early film, photographs, paintings and artefacts. More information about the exhibition can be found on the Museum of London website.



To book for this trip, or for more information, talk to a member of staff or contact us via telephone 0115 9473134 or email enquiries@bromleyhouse.org

Knitters

The Knitters group is still going strong, clicking its way towards the end of its first year...and what a productive year it's been! Nearly £300 was raised through the sale of knitted items at the Garden Open day, bringing our current total close to £500, raising money towards purchasing a new carpet for the George Green Room. There was a knitted presence at the Members' Garden Party at the end of July and there is always an interesting and varied selection of items for sale in the library itself – commissions also taken!

Along the way, we have made new friends, learnt new skills and discovered hidden talents! Who knew that Maggie could create such lovely flowers, or that Anne's house is a veritable Tardis when we need just the right button, pattern, needles, wool...? Who knew that Chris is the Mary Portas of pricing? And as for Evelyn, Queen of Knitters, the fount of all knitted knowledge (beautifully neat, of course): what would we do without her?

The group meets fortnightly on Wednesdays and welcomes both new members and donations of wool. Come and join us!

New Journals

'Discover Your Family History' magazine became an online only magazine in the summer, so we have replaced that with 'Your Family Tree' after leaving two choices of magazines out for members to comment on. We have also taken out a subscription to 'Midland History', published twice a year, and should hopefully receive their Autumn edition on 'The Midlands and the Great War'. We have also now started subscribing to 'Sight and Sound', the international film magazine.

A Nottingham Library Remembers: Bromley House Library and The First World War 1914 - 1918

We were pleased to be one of the early partners on the City and County 'Trent to Trenches' project, commemorating World War One. For both our talks and exhibition, we decided to focus on stories with a local connection, concentrating on the East Midlands, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, and more specifically the library and its members.

The exhibition has been made possible by the generosity and enthusiasm of our members, who have offered to loan their precious photographs and momentos, and to tell the 'stories' behind their families' experience of the Great War. It is displayed in the Gallery and in the main reading rooms, and includes two and three dimensional objects and artefacts, displayed alongside photographic images of those involved in the war – many of whom lost their lives.

Collating and researching these items and stories has involved much staff and volunteer time - for which many thanks. The exhibition, by itself, justifies a visit to Bromley House Library before it is dismantled before Christmas. The Thoroton Room is a resources room, collecting together much knowledge and items of local interest and a visit can intrigue and absorb an hour or two in enjoyable study.

The exhibition is open to the public on Wednesday and on most Wednesdays there is a lunchtime talk. The remaining programmed details are on the included flyer.

The Library is grateful to the Lady Hind Charitable Trust for its generous financial support without which this project would not have been possible.

Out, dammed spot! out, I say!

As Lady Macbeth discovered more easily said than done.

You will have seen that shortly after the new reading room was completed a large patch of damp appeared in the far right hand corner ceiling. The timing roughly coincided with the deluge that caused flooding in parts of Nottingham in July 2013.

There had been an overflow from the gutter which drained the roof on the side opposite the garden, which is above a covered area occupied by Nandos' restaurant. The overflow had soaked the wall below the gutter allowing water to penetrate into the reading room.

Inspection from Nandos revealed that the problem was a continuing one. Whenever it rained a constant dribble of water from the gutter/downpipe connection was running down the wall.

Access to the gutter was difficult, because it would be necessary to construct a platform over Nandos glass roof to provide a secure base to enable work on the gutter.

After negotiation with Nandos, it emerged that they also had problems with a leak into their roof, and we agreed to share the cost of erecting the scaffolding and platform necessary to permit access to both areas.

Given the difficulty of access, we agreed to adopt a long term solution by installing a larger capacity gutter, plus a substantial flashing so that on occasions when the gutter overflowed the water was prevented from running straight down the wall. It was also an opportunity to carry out any other maintenance to the roof.

The work has now been carried out and hopefully over the next months the brick and internal plaster work will dry out and can be repaired/redecorated.

Such are the problems of looking after a 260 year old building - all at a cost of nearly £10,000, which is a large dent in our budget!

Neville Hoskins room

The Neville Hoskins Room with its mid-18th century ceiling is for many the showpiece of Bromley House Library. But after 260 years it is cracked and today dirty and dull. It looks sad and is crying out for restoration especially after the successful redecoration of the hall, staircase and cupola.

Moreover, we have had a generous offer of financial support which has allowed us to commission a conservator to investigate the integrity of the ceiling. New marks on the ceiling show where experimental cleaning has been carried out. We have recruited a stage lighting expert, introduced by Nottingham Playhouse, to advise how the room should be lit to make the most of its period features while improving the quality of light for reading. His initial reports are in and are being reviewed.

Our aim is a cleaned room, restored ceiling, and better lighting although we are anxious to retain the present atmosphere and feeling.

The brief was to "conserve the Neville Hoskins room in the most sympathetic and non-intrusive way so as not to disturb the decayed elegance and appeal of the tranquil time capsule environment".

We propose that, once cleaned, the room will serve its current purposes, with the same book collections, retaining the large table, but hopefully with a new carpet.

Our target date for the work is the first part of 2015 and we anticipate it will take about two months.

Books for sale

Having retrieved books from some of the more inaccessible areas of the Library during our cataloguing project, as well as finding one or two things that had been on our missing list for several decades, we discovered a set of books that had been withdrawn from library stock well over 20 years ago, but hadn't left the building. Having reassessed these, it seems we have triplicates of some items from our older fiction collection. Given that no-one has missed them over the last quarter of a century, we are happy to offer them to sale to our members, and the money gained will go into our book conservation fund so that some of our other fiction books can have the tender loving care that they need so they can continue to be read and enjoyed. Look out for these books going on display, for which we shall be asking a reasonable price, or contact Geraldine for more information.



Nottingham Festival of Words Judith Allnatt – Writer in Residence

We are delighted to welcome Judith Allnatt as our first ever 'writer in residence'. As well as using our Library and the WWI exhibition to inspire her writing, Judith will read from her latest book, *The Moon Field* on Monday 17th November. Tickets are available via Nottingham Festival of Words Box Office at the Playhouse. 0115 9419419.



Christmas Party
Saturday 13th
December 11am – 1pm

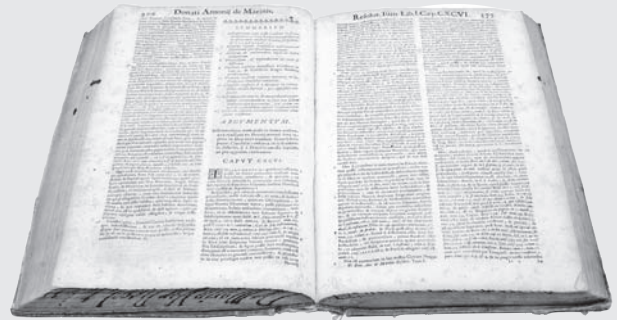
Come and join us for our festive celebration. Tickets cost £7.50 and include your first glass of wine or a soft drink and refreshments. Traditional musicians, The Red Hatters, will be performing and there will be a quiz to stretch your mind. It is always a lovely occasion, so do come and help us to celebrate. Tickets will be on sale from Monday 3rd November.

Saturday Lecture programme

Our Saturday lectures are held in either the Thoroton Room or the New Reading Room and tickets cost £5, being available a calendar month before the lecture. Booked in so far we have the following lectures. They all start at 10.30 am

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| January 17th | Hot Liquid Pleasures
Carol Barstow
A light hearted look at the introduction of tea coffee and chocolate into the country in the seventeenth century, and the reactions to these drinks. Samples of drinking chocolate included... |
| March 21st | Cook and Book
Jackie Skinner and Julia Pirie
A literary themed food demonstration and readings
A feast for the ears and the tastebuds! |

Nineteenth Century Reading Group



We plan in the New Year to run a reading group focussing on 19th century literature. We will be aided in this by a placement student from the English Department of the University of Nottingham who will explore our collections, making a selection of books and researching some background information about them, to put them into context. Please let us know if you would be interested in this group.

BROMLEY HOUSE LIBRARY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Annual General Meeting of the company will be held on Thursday 6th November 2014 commencing at 2.15 pm in the Library, Angel Row Nottingham NG1 6HL

AGENDA

1. To receive the report of the directors and the financial statements for the year ending 31st March 2014
2. To elect directors
3. To elect a president
4. To re appoint Rogers Spencer Ltd as independent examiner and to authorise the directors to fix their remuneration

By order of the Board
David Hallett
Honorary Secretary

13th October 2014

A member of the company who is entitled to attend and vote may appoint a proxy to attend and vote in his/her stead. A proxy need not be a member of the company.

Bromley House Library

Bromley House, Angel Row, Nottingham, NG1 6HL 0115 9473134 www.bromleyhouse.org