

SOUTH EAST MUSIC LIBRARIES INFORMATION FORUM (SEMLIF)

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 24th November at the Surrey Performing Arts Library, Dorking.

Present:

Pamela Thompson (RCM), Ruth Hellen (Enfield), Liz Hartt (Wokingham), Robert Tucker (Corp. of London), Heather Davey, Kathryn Durrans (Hants), Jane Henshaw (Colchester Institute), Tom Kearns (Harrow), Tony Bralant (Barnet), Graham Muncy, Annabel Haycraft (Surrey) – minutes.

Apologies:

David Cook (Bromley), Frances Metcalfe (Kent), Kate Elliott (Brent), Rosemary Firmin (TCM), John Conroy (Greenwich), Miriam Valencia (Herts).

WELCOME, by Graham Muncy.

Pamela Thompson gave a report on ‘Access to Music: Music Libraries and Archives in the UK and Ireland – current themes and a realistic vision for the future.’ She outlined how the document had argued the case for the financial, cultural and social value of music in libraries. It had also questioned how current services such as Encore and Cecilia might be sustained in the future, if funds continued to be withdrawn. A discussion followed, during which it was agreed that libraries would have to work together more in the future to ensure their survival.

Updates on IAML and copyright issues followed, presented by Ruth Hellen.

The next IAML Study Weekend is to be held from the 11th to the 14th June 2004 in Dublin. The International Conference would be held in Oslo next August. On the copyright side, an Act was passed at the end of October which meant that ‘fair dealing’ no longer covers ‘commercial’ research. Defining ‘commercial’ could be difficult, and Ruth recommended a glance at the CILIP website for guidance on this. The MPA is working on a code of fair practice following the Act, but there should not be many changes impinging on music specifically. Ruth suggested that librarians should avoid giving general advice to customers on copyright: it is better to simply tell them the regulations and let them act accordingly. A discussion followed on examples of copyright use.

NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM AROUND THE REGION.

Harrow: Tom Kearns described the problems with ordering new material that had resulted from Rose Records selling out to Rempoy. Staff had found themselves unable to supply anything out of the ordinary, and Amazon was being used for some material. Others were in agreement that they had suffered similar problems

as a result of this takeover. Tom also mentioned that the library was recruiting two new librarians.

Barnet: Tony Bralant mentioned that they had also had problems with Remploy, resulting in few CD's being acquired. Within the borough, media funds were being allocated to videos, DVD's and playstations rather than to music, because they generated more income. There was a freeze on staff vacancies, due to lack of funds for recruitment.

Wokingham: Liz Hartt reported that unusually, she had received a budget this year! Most of this had now been spent. On staffing, library assistants were in good supply, but the Literature Promotion Officer had left and the Cataloguer was departing quite soon. It was hoped that the two posts would soon be filled. (On the behalf of Reading, Graham Muncy mentioned that use of the music library was declining, and the collection was likely to be downsized. An internet café was being added. There seemed to be relatively few protests, although the music department at Reading University was also under threat).

Colchester Institute: Jane Henshaw reported that the library catalogue is now online, at webview.colchester.ac.uk

Hampshire: Kathryn Durrans reported that structural changes had taken place and music was no longer a separate department. The former music librarian, Jane McGrave, had retired, and there were no major policy changes. The collection at Hants comprises over 600 vocal score sets and approx 100 orchestral sets. While the vocal sets were on Encore, the orchestral sets were not, so speculative enquiries about interlending would be welcomed. Within the county, 'Discovery Centres' were being created in libraries, which linked up with local theatres and museums.

Enfield: Ruth Hellen reported that they had held their annual 'mega-sale' of books, cassettes and CD's. People did not seem to be buying videos as much as in the past.

Corp. of London (Barbican): Robert Tucker reported that the library had extended its opening hours, but usage on Fridays was very low. Thursday evening opening had also been introduced, but this time was rather quiet. Similarly, although Saturday opening hours had been extended until 4pm, usage appeared to be relatively low. The library may possibly lose money as a result of the new hours, and various 'Plus' surveys were being carried out. A major refit of the library had taken place, but there had been restrictions on some developments due to the Barbican being a listed building. A disabled lift and new counter would probably be delayed now until into the new year. A new security system was planned, but tagging of CD's was complicated and needed consideration.

Surrey: Graham Muncy reported that the DVD service had started in the last two weeks. The current collection of this material numbered about 160 at present, and covered the subjects of Dance, classic and world Drama, Opera and Bollywood. Recent FOSPAL talks had been successful, bringing about 40-60 people into the library on Saturday afternoons, which helped to promote the library. A current

exhibition on RVW in wartime was on display, which was also drawing in more people. Surrey libraries are restructuring, removing many librarians from individual libraries and creating a major information centre at Guildford. Library assistants are being trained up to answer enquiries. Professional staff are being put into new teams which reflect concepts such as social inclusion and lifelong learning.

Hertfordshire: Miriam Valencia reported (via fax) that the expected download of Herts catalogue records for Encore would take place very soon. Money had been provided for this. Miriam will be leaving her job at the end of the year to take up a new post at the Poetry Library.

AOB : Robert Tucker queried the ease of access to Encore. Ruth Hellen described the best route to the website. Pam Thompson voiced her concerns over the future of funding for Encore, and who would eventually take over the work from Malcolm Jones. Free web space may not always be available, and it may be necessary to look at the possibility of subscriptions in the future. There was some discussion of possible changes.

A reminder that new vocal set locations for inclusion on Encore should be sent to Malcolm Jones, and that new orchestral locations should be notified to Pat Dye at BLDSC.

Date of next meeting: this has been provisionally set for Monday 21st June 2004 at the Prokofiev Archive, Goldsmith's College, London.

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