



## Cambridge Library Group

### Events for your diary

- 4 January, Twelfth Night Party, CUP Bookshop, **6.00-7.30pm**
- 29 February, Sophie Read: 'Eyeless in Islington: Milton and *Samson Agonistes*', Morison Room, University Library, **5.00 for 5.30pm**
- 11 March, Jill Dawson: 'Mud and light: a talk on writing', Newnham College, **5.30 for 6.00pm**
- 9 April, Catherine Rider: 'Magic in late medieval priests' manuals', Lloyd Room, Christ's College, **5.30 for 6.00pm**

### Inside this issue:

Why we need IFLA	1
Central Asian manuscript forgeries	2
Highlights for 2008	3
Why Google is bad for you	4
A history of the English carol	3

#### CLG Chair:

**Candace Guite**

cjeg2@cam.ac.uk

#### Membership Secretary:

**Sue Williamson**

Sue.Williamson@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

#### Acting Reflections Editor:

**Anna Jones**

ahr23@cam.ac.uk

## AGM 2007—Bob McKee: 'Why we need IFLA'

After the AGM at Trinity College on 17 September, CLG members were delighted to welcome Bob McKee, Chief Executive of CILIP. Bob is a member of the Governing Board and Executive Committee of IFLA, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions. He is actively involved with IFLA-FAIFE, one of the core activities of IFLA covering work on Freedom of Access to Information and Freedom of Expression. Bob gave an interesting talk on 'Why we need IFLA', enabling us to find out more about why IFLA exists and what it does.

According to its website ([www.ifla.org](http://www.ifla.org)), IFLA is "the leading international body representing the interests of library and information services and their users". Founded in 1927, it now has 1700 members in 150 countries. Bob pointed out that the role of IFLA is closely connected to the role of CILIP, and that several of the reasons he would give for 'Why we need IFLA' could also be applied to 'why we need CILIP'. Membership of IFLA is institutional rather than individual, therefore if you are a member of CILIP you are automatically a member of IFLA (many of us CILIP members had been unaware of this!).

Bob recounted how he first became involved in IFLA in 1999 as chief executive of the Library Association. As his professional interest is the role of the library in society, he found IFLA's 2000 international conference fascinating, and it gave him an opportunity to meet managers of other library associations. Part of IFLA's rationale is to be a community of practice, enabling people to support each other in their work. The IFLA conferences (and IFLA in general) bring information professionals together to talk about professional issues, allowing people to broaden their horizons through interaction with

international colleagues. A delegate attending an IFLA conference for the first time commented how easy it is to take an institutional view of professional issues and lose sight of the 'bigger picture'. IFLA encourages both professional development through its wide-ranging membership and interaction between our profession and the society in which we practise.

Bob stressed that the IFLA membership community is "one of equals, not a case of the First World telling the Third World how to do things". Work goes on all year round, not just at the annual conference, and this work has a significant impact on countries without the networks of professional associations and activities that we have in the UK. Bob has found his work with IFLA inspiring, as he believes the chance to connect with other people in the profession can remind you why you chose the profession in the first place.

*[Continued on p. 4]*



Bob McKee with CLG members at the AGM

**CONGRATULATIONS**  
to CLG members **Anna Pensaert & Tim Eggington** on the birth of their daughter **Sophie** in November

## Ursula Sims-Williams: Central Asian manuscript forgeries: a little known aspect of the Great Game



Ursula Sims-Williams with examples of the ‘real thing’

What’s in a game? ‘Competition’ and ‘rivalry’ come quickly to mind, or perhaps ‘fun’ for some of us, but a more obscure aspect – the manuscript forgery business – was described for CLG members at our October even, when Ursula Sims-Williams (the Honorary Librarian at the Ancient India and Iran Trust) delivered an engaging talk on the forgeries of central Asian manuscripts prompted by the Anglo-Russian ‘Great Game’ conflict.

When rumours began circulating, late in the 19th century, of exotic cities buried beneath the sands, many European countries – especially those vying for supremacy in Central Asia – leaped at the opportunity to establish dominion through archaeological endeavours. Interested scholars were dispatched to investigate, but some expeditions proved rather more perilous than others: Swede Sven Hedin returned home with only three surviving team-members, while Hungarian-British archaeologist Aurel Stein never lost a man. Rivalries between nations ensured that the adventuring spirit remained keen, as attested by the Sanskritist Rudolph Hoernle’s endorsement of Stein’s expedition: “Khotan and the Southern portion of Chinese-Turkestan seem to me distinctly the proper sphere for British exploration. It by right belongs to the British ‘sphere of influence’ to use the modern term; and we should not allow others to secure the credit which ought to belong to ourselves.” Scholars, statesmen, and some with interests in both directions were entranced by this relatively uncharted territory.

Such European interest is fairly understandable, but what seemed inconceivable to contemporary scholars was that the local population would readily supply forgeries of its own history. Hoernle,

even when confronted with suspicious manuscripts, said he could not believe they might be forgeries; although eventually he decided that the truth could only be determined by a ‘European’ expert on the spot. It is perhaps only natural, however, that this market would be exploited by opportunists, and terribly inventive opportunists they were. Forged manuscripts included some specimens in the shape of pineapples, others with blocks of identical prints stamped across in a meaningless fashion, and still others in a ‘Cyrillic’ blockprint tailor-made for the Russian market. As collectors’ suspicions grew, a Captain Henry Deasy was commissioned to assess the situation. By the third day of his expedition he realized his guides had no clue as to their bearings or supposed destination. Islam Akhun, the main mastermind behind the forgeries, surrendered when confronted with the evidence. This setback hardly cramped such a character, as he later found success masquerading as both a British inspector and as a medicine man (armed with ground-up manuscripts, apparently!). In the end, it is more surprising that the European ‘experts’ should have been deceived. With so many new sources appearing in so many previously unknown scripts, however, we must conclude that both scholars and sellers were playing this game-within-the-Game to the best of their ability.

After the lecture, we enjoyed touring the Trust’s beautiful house and gardens. This was the CLG’s first event at the Ancient India and Iran Trust, and we would like to thank the members of the organisation for allowing us to visit this unique library, and Ms. Sims-Williams for her extremely intriguing presentation.

*Carolyn Gray Keim  
Christ’s College Library*

### ***GARDEN PARTY 2008***

**We will have another opportunity to visit the beautiful house and gardens of the Ancient India & Iran Trust in Brooklands Avenue for the CLG Garden Party on  
17 July 2008,  
with entertainment by  
*Women of Note***

# HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2008

## New Programme

Those who have renewed their subscriptions and received a copy of the programme for 2008 will know that we have an exciting year of events ahead. Highlights include the 3 visits profiled here; for further information please contact the organisers (details provided), and look out for publicity in due course.

*Please note that although the programme follows the calendar year the subscription year runs from September to August. Sue Williamson, the Membership Secretary, is happy to receive subscriptions renewals for 2008 (further details from <http://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/maps/clgh.htm>)*

### Visit to Littlehey Prison 24 June 2008

Cherith Durant, Librarian at HMP Littlehey has kindly offered a tour of the prison library to CLG members.

Numbers are limited (max. 20, in 2 groups of 10)

All visitors must be security checked, so full names, addresses and dates of birth of those interested in attending this visit must be submitted **by 31 March**.

**Travel will be by car-share, so please indicate if you will need or are able to offer a lift at the time of booking.**

**For further details and to book a place please contact Chris Barker ([c.barker@jesus.cam.ac.uk](mailto:c.barker@jesus.cam.ac.uk)) at Jesus college.**

**N.B. For those not able to attend this visit, Cherith Durant will present a talk entitled 'Books behind bars' to the CLG at Trinity Hall on 11 November 2008.**

## ANTWERP

**18-21 September 2008**

Deposits are now required to secure a place on the Antwerp trip, which will include visits to the Antwerp Conservatoire, Municipal Library, Public Library and Plantin-Moretus Museum. Please send a cheque for £50 per person, payable to the Cambridge Library Group, to the Treasurer, Jennifer Maddock (Library, Babraham Institute, Babraham Research Campus, Cambridge CB22 3AT) **by Friday 15 February**. This will serve as a non-refundable deposit and be set against the cost of train travel.

Please contact Ann Keith ([eak21@cam.ac.uk](mailto:eak21@cam.ac.uk)) at Christ's College for further information about the trip.

## LONDON 2008

### Visit to Parliamentary Archives (House of Lords) & the British Library

**3 July 2008**

11.45am—12.45pm Visit to the Parliamentary Archives at the House of Lords (Palace of Westminster)

2.45—3.45pm Visit to the British Library (Euston Road)

Numbers for these visits are limited to 15 and will be allocated on a first come first served basis when booking is announced.

A charge of £6 will be made to cover the cost of the visits, and members are asked to make their own travel arrangements.

Organiser: Jim Scannell  
([jimandtom3@netscape.net](mailto:jimandtom3@netscape.net))

## Bill Thompson: 'Why Google is bad for you'

As a Google user I was very keen to know exactly how bad Google is for me. Most commonly I'm driven to frustration by hits from non-UK sites when I restrict a search to UK sites only. But, as Bill Thompson illustrated with a number of well-placed and entertaining examples in his talk to the CLG on 14 November, the consequences of relying on Google for those not skilled in sorting and evaluating information are potentially considerably more grave. Fundamentally, Google is not a tool for serious research. Likening it to the notorious branded soft drink 'Sunny Delight', Thompson, who is a professional internet commentator, including for the BBC, acknowledged its addictive qualities (confessing himself to be a daily user), but bemoaned the attraction of the quick-fix answer which may barely scratch the surface of the topic investigated, and instils a lazy approach to information seeking. We were reminded of the rich internet resources provided through subscription services, which do not appear in a simple Google search. Several questioners picked up on this theme, reflecting professional concerns in both the academic and public sectors about the difficulty of encouraging users to consider a broader view of the internet than one shaped exclusively by search engines. Scepticism towards Google was not shared by all, as the lively discussion that followed the talk also reflected enthusiastic support for the fact that it has made the business of finding some information much easier and quicker, and brought it to a wider audience than traditional reference sources. At the end of one of the best attended events of the season, however, we unanimously embraced some useful food for thought. Many thanks to Pembroke College for the use of the Nihon Room, and to Pat Aske and Candace Guite for organising the event.

*Jim Scannell*

Bill Thompson's website: <http://www.andfinally.com>



Bill Thompson (image taken from <http://www.andfinally.com>)

Bob McKee: 'Why we need IFLA', *continued from p. 1*

Bob went on to explain in more detail the rationale behind IFLA, and the reasons why he personally believes it is important. It is an agency for professional development, but also for personal development, bringing together people with a common purpose and giving them a chance to "look at world affairs through the lens of librarianship". For Bob, the personal learning aspect is the most important reason why we need IFLA. He spoke about examples of global issues affecting the library and information profession:

- Setting up a dialogue between the Palestinian and Israeli library communities
- The promotion of public health information in the fight against HIV and AIDS
- Issues facing the National Library of Iraq
- The U.S. Patriot Act: issues facing libraries in the war on terror: should public libraries stock Islamic extremist material?
- Internet access in China

To answer the question which was the title of Bob's talk, we need IFLA because it is a global network of information professionals. It provides opportunities for professional development through its annual conferences and its year-round activities, and opportunities for personal development through the bringing together of people with shared professional interests from around the world. There are many important issues facing the global information society: IFLA provides a focus for engagement with these issues and a way for information professionals to learn from one another.

Bob ended his talk by informing CLG members that CILIP can help you get more involved with IFLA. A bursary scheme for first-timers is available for the IFLA conference. Two Cambridge librarians (Libby Tilley and Joanna Ball) have attended the conference before through this scheme.

More information about IFLA is available at [www.ifla.org](http://www.ifla.org)

Bob McKee's web page is at [www.cilip.org.uk/aboutcilip/staff/biogs/cebulletin/](http://www.cilip.org.uk/aboutcilip/staff/biogs/cebulletin/)

*Alice Hine*  
*Divinity Faculty Library*



Members enjoying seasonal conviviality during the December meeting at Christ's

## Ann Keith: 'From Anon to John Rutter: A history of the English carol'

The association of carols with Christmas, as part of an unbroken tradition dating from the Middle Ages is a commonly held view. Anne Keith's seasonally appropriate talk on 12 December, "From Anon. to John Rutter: the story of the English carol", showed this to be an oversimplification. In fact, the history of the English carol is a complex tale of tradition and revival.

*The Oxford Book of Carols* describes a carol as "A religious seasonal song of joyful character, in the vernacular, and sung by the common people". Carols were traditionally sung throughout the year and not just at Christmas, and themes reflected the old pagan and the new Christian religions, for example celebrating holly and wassail and the cult of the Virgin Mary. The word carol denotes a dance and the first written reference to the English carol is manuscript copies of the late thirteenth-century *Cursor Mundi*. Gradually the connection with dance and the common people was lost, and the character of carols changed as they were adopted by the elite, becoming hymns and mostly associated with Christmas. This period of what we now know as 'manuscript carols' flourished between 1350 and 1540. Its subsequent decline is associated with the invention of printing and the rise of Protestantism, when many manuscript carols were stored, lost or destroyed. For the next hundred years the carol survived and flourished in the oral tradition, assisted by itinerant waits. Mainly folk and ballad carols, such as *The Holly and the Ivy* and *I saw three ships*, date from this period. Yet by 1660 the carol had all but withered and died, due to the civil War and the banning of Christmas under the Commonwealth.

Later the tradition was upheld in the regions of the West Country and in Wales, and carols were kept alive by the West Gallery musicians made

famous by Thomas Hardy in *Under the Greenwood Tree*. By the nineteenth century the introduction of organs in churches usurped many groups of West Gallery musicians, and carols were generally replaced by hymns. The carol as we know it today owes much to the increase in literacy, the Oxford Movement, the popularity of choral singing, and the English Folk Song society, in the late nineteenth century. New text was added to traditional tunes giving a medieval feel, as can be seen in *Past Three O'Clock*, where the chorus is a genuine street cry, the verses Victorian and the tune traditional. Members of the English Folk Song Society compiled collections of oral and written carols, and publications such as *The Oxford Book of Carols* (1928) are still in use today. In the twentieth century composers like John Rutter have returned to the medieval foundation of dance carols, but many composers now write for choirs and there are fewer carols for the 'common people' to sing. The form is flourishing once again, albeit through a twenty-first-century lens.

The talk was illustrated throughout with recorded examples of carols from all periods (including, memorably a traditional performance of *While shepherds watched* from Sheffield), and the evening concluded, appropriately, with a glass of mulled wine.

Lesley Read  
Robinson College

**Best wishes for a Happy Christmas and New Year from the CLG Committee and we look forward to seeing as many members as possible at the CUP bookshop on Twelfth Night (4 January)**