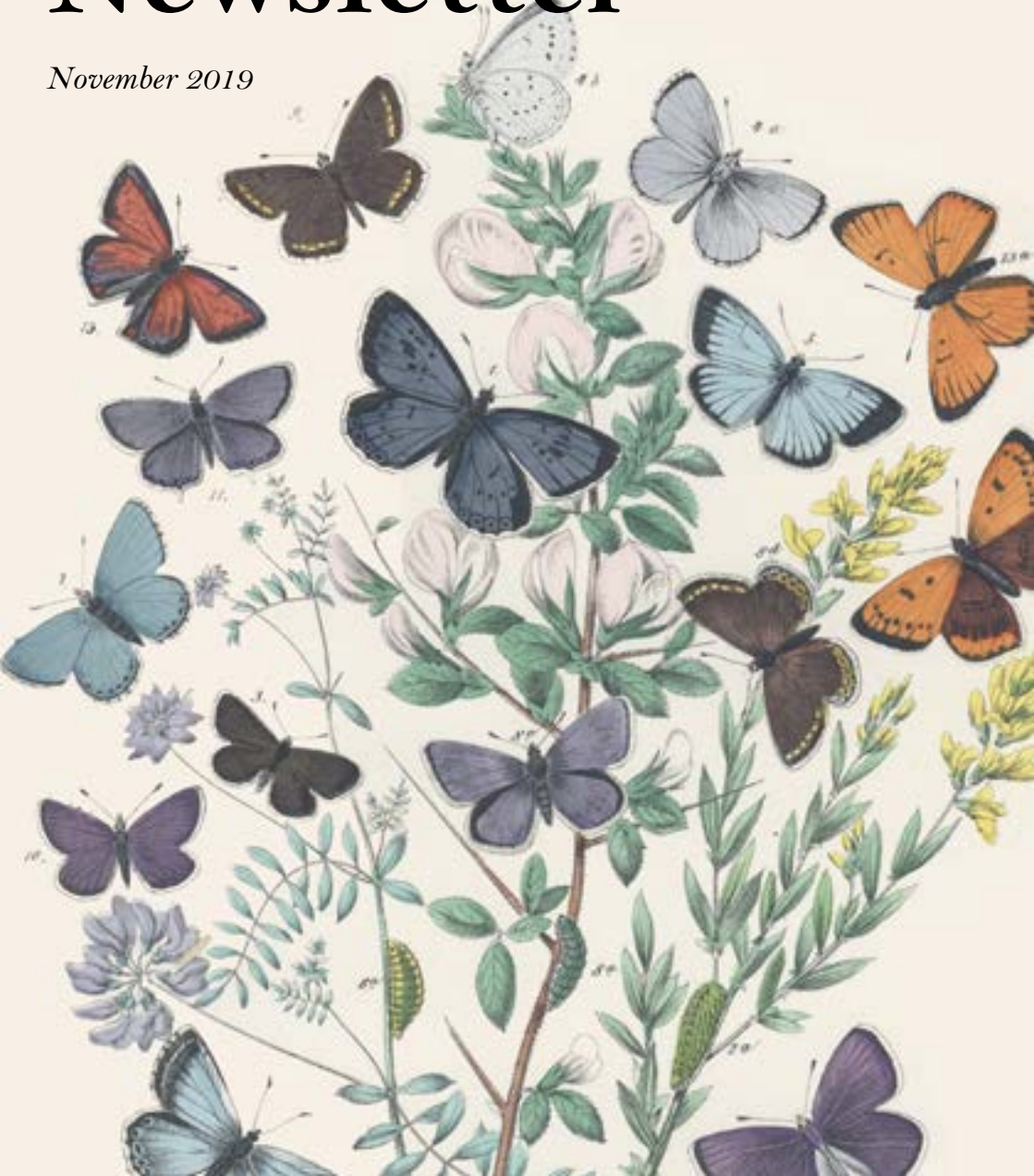


Friends *of the* University Library

Newsletter

November 2019



Welcome to the latest edition of the Friends' Newsletter

I am delighted to introduce our reflections on a busy and productive year across the University Library service. I hope that you will be impressed and inspired by the many ways in which library colleagues demonstrate their commitment to deliver high quality resources and services across our various sites.

Inevitably, there is only space to reflect on some of the highlights, but they should give you a flavour of the range and extent of our work. Building enhancements always feature prominently, and we recently completed a major refurbishment of Level 2 of the Philip Robinson Library. I believe this is the most significant piece of work we have ever undertaken in this area, encompassing a major refresh not only of the student facing space, but of the two main staff areas. Jenny Campbell and David Errington, ably assisted by colleagues in Estates and the University IT service did a sterling job in managing this ambitious project. Our new Welcome Desk and Enquiry Hub have made a huge improvement to the foyer area, as have the new accessible exit gates, and the more prominent location for the Student Text Collection (STC) has been very



favourably received. The old STC area has been transformed into a new social learning space and behind the scenes, we've installed an automated booksorter to speed up the return of books to the floors.

The Team Valley Research Reserve has also been a building site for the last few months in order to create a new BS EN 16893:2018 compliant Special Collections Store to accommodate the incoming archive of the renowned architect and town planner, Sir Terry Farrell. His archive comprises 3D models of buildings, as well as plans and drawings, so this will be a

fascinating collection to curate.

It's rare that we don't have some awards or prizes to celebrate, and this year is no exception. We were delighted to learn that Dr Terry Charlton, our Learning Technologist, won the LILAC Digital Award for his work in transforming the library's information literacy portfolio to a more engaging blended learning offer. In a related competition, our Academic Liaison team were runners up in the Outstanding Information Literacy Team award. And to cap it all, their work has led to us being shortlisted for yet another Times Higher Education Leadership and Management Award (THELMA) for outstanding library team. We are very proud of all the staff who have contributed to these projects, and it's wonderful to see them getting external recognition for their work.

The Library has a longstanding commitment to support the University's Widening Participation programme. One of the many successful activities delivered by our outreach team was a wonderful project undertaken in collaboration with Historic England, Northumberland National Park, English Heritage, together with academic colleagues from the Newcastle Centre for the Literary

Arts and Fine Art. The art and poetry that the children produced was truly outstanding.

We are also very proud of a new initiative delivered by colleagues in our Writing Development Centre, Learning and Teaching Development Service and Academic Liaison team. Newcastle Beginnings is an online course aimed at students who have received their A level results and know they will soon be joining us as undergraduates. It's designed to be informative and engaging to help them confidently make the transition into University study. Our commitment to supporting students throughout their time at Newcastle is further demonstrated by



the StudyWell@Ncl initiative led by our Customer Services division. Colleagues in our divisional Libraries in Medicine and Law also developed relevant and engaging literary collections to promote reading for pleasure alongside academic study in these disciplines.

The Friends of the University Library are an important part of the University Library family, and we are always grateful for the many and varied ways in which you support our work. One of the highlights this year was the Friends' sponsorship of a new award for Young People's Poetry, which was run as part of the annual Newcastle Poetry Festival. We've included the winning entries in this newsletter and I am sure you will agree, it is a great pleasure to be able to celebrate and promote the work of such talented young people.

I would like to acknowledge the contributions of Rachel Hawkes, Kim Hodgkinson and Joan Hulme, who all play a part in supporting the Friends of the University Library. I would also like to thank Jessie Salmon, who has edited and assembled this newsletter. I'm also delighted to welcome and introduce Wendy Luker, who joined as my Deputy at the end of May.

And finally, on behalf of all my Library colleagues, I would like to formally thank you for your continuing support

and encouragement. I hope you enjoy this newsletter and look forward to meeting you at Friends events over the coming year.

[Jill Taylor-Roe, University Librarian](#)



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Introducing Wendy Luker, Deputy Librarian

I started in my new role at the end of May, and am enjoying it hugely. In fact, I've reached the conclusion that accepting the role of Deputy University Librarian at Newcastle University has been the best career move I have ever made. As I was uprooting from West Yorkshire to move home as well as job, it was no small decision. Newcastle is my fourth University as an employee – I have previously worked in the Libraries at Sheffield Hallam, Lancaster and Leeds Beckett Universities. I have been a student at UCL, Northumbria and Leeds.



My first impressions of Newcastle University Library were of the warmth and dedication of the staff.

My first impressions of Newcastle University Library were of the warmth and dedication of the staff. Everyone I met seemed keen to tell me about their role, and their part of the service. It was a very positive sign to me in my first few weeks that these introductory meetings seemed always to overrun, such as the enthusiasm of my new colleagues to tell me all about their work.

I've also been very struck by the high quality of the work carried out, whether this is exemplified through the attention to detail in large scale projects such as designing and equipping the student study spaces in the Marjorie Robinson Library Rooms, or in important everyday tasks like books getting back onto the shelves as speedily as possible.

The attention to detail continues into imaginative additional features, like the shelf ends at the Walton Library, which use medical images from the Special Collections to really brighten up the space.

I will never forget my first impression of the Team Valley Research Reserve – what an amazing sight it is to see the serried ranks of those massive rolling stacks. It has been exciting to observe the refurbishment work in the Philip Robinson Library this Summer, and to witness the expertise and hard work of all involved in transforming the staff and student spaces on Level 2.

From my impressions to date, I'm sure it will be demanding – a service of this scale and complexity is bound to be – but exciting and rewarding at the same time.

I'm looking forward to working with Jill and the rest of the team immensely on whatever the future holds for the Library.



A Sense of Place

This summer the Education Outreach team collaborated with Historic England, Northumberland National Park, English Heritage and colleagues from the Newcastle Centre for the Literary Arts and the School of Fine Art to provide a unique educational experience for 90 Year 9 students from Northumberland.

Bewick and Northumberland

With funding from Historic England, we worked with Bedlington Academy, Haydon Bridge High School and Prudhoe Community High School to challenge Year 9 students to write a poem and create a piece of artwork inspired by the Bewick images held in our Special Collections and the majestic beauty of Northumberland National Park.



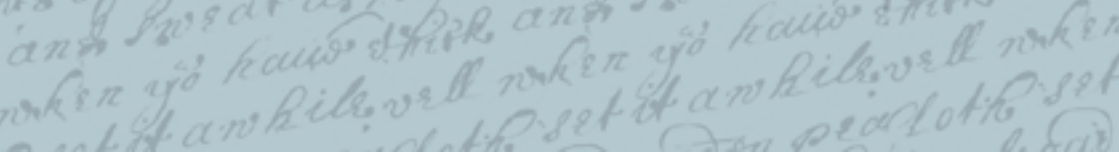
Day One – Newcastle University

The students visited the University Library where they studied the Bewick images. They then attended a lecture on poetry and a 'sense of place' by award-winning poet, Professor Sinéad Morrissey. Finally, the students took part in a poetry workshop led by published poets and lecturers from Newcastle University.

'I liked to look at all the different books and materials. It gave me a lot of ideas about what to write.'

Day Two – The Sill, Northumberland National Park

On the second day of the project the students travelled to The Sill where they spent the morning exploring artwork and poetry inspired by the landscape of Northumberland National Park.



In the afternoon, a National Park Ranger led them on a walk to Sycamore Gap. The ranger and a representative from English Heritage talked to the students about the landscape, heritage, flora and fauna. The students then took some time out to get inspiration from their surroundings and to write poems and do more sketching.

'It was really fun and I've left feeling inspired!

Day Three – Print Making

The third and final day of the project took place back at Newcastle University. The students enjoyed a guided tour of the Hatton gallery and the School of Fine Art before taking part in a print making workshop led by Northern Print.

'Fantastic, messy, I loved the painting techniques the most!'

'It makes me feel as though I can be crowned with the title of Artist officially.'



Exhibition

The students' poetry and artwork were displayed at The Sill throughout August. Several of the students commented on how much they enjoyed the project and how proud they were of their work.

'It's a new experience that opens your eyes to things you hadn't known before!'

'It makes me feel proud that my work is good enough to be exhibited!'

'I'm very proud that my work can be seen by anyone at the Sill!'

Their teachers also thought that the project had been extremely successful:

'Our students will take life long memories from this project. It has been incredibly rewarding!'

a pints of sweat, and
shik and shik and shik and shik
all niken yo kaud shik and shik
shik shik well niken yo kaud shik
shik shik well niken yo kaud shik
shik shik well niken yo kaud shik

A Sense of Place - Student Artwork and Poetry



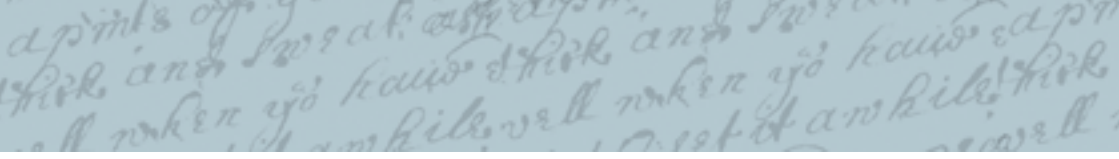
and I was a...
naken yō kaurō shik...
at a while, well nigh yō kaurō shik...
set of a while, well nigh...
set of a while, well nigh...



An unlikely warrior

Tranquility,
so bustling with life yet so silent,
a landscape like one I once saw in a
lucid dream, which I long to return to,
the trees branches moved and coiled like a snake
about to strike its helpless prey. The dark silhouettes of
distant mountains seemed to threaten the landscape into submission,
but not the tree. For the tree was a beacon of light from the hills.
Refusing obedience to the ones who think themselves dominant, his
disobedience brings hope to the landscape for his stubbornness is defying them
access to
those ancient lands. The only noise that could be heard was the distant
humming
of a firefly whose light shone as far as the eye could see, for the tree was his
only companion the only one he could call family,
the only one who could protect him.

a solemn breeze set about the tree but,
No chill could chill this warrior. For he had
Thrived and lived through countless battles
And wars, not many could boast advantage
Over him, he was the totem of hope in
The darkness he had lived when others has
had not Would people remember him when
he inevitably perished, he did not mind
For he believed he had served his sole
purpose in life to protect his lands from the
destruction of a chaotic tyrant he once fell
victim to.



Thomas Baker Brown - A Local Tommy

In Autumn 2018, a small grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund enabled our Education Outreach team to work on an exciting, archives-inspired drama project with local primary school children to commemorate the end of the First World War.

Cap-a-Pie and WWI

In this project two classes of Year 5 children from Star of the Sea Primary School and Carville Primary School in North Tyneside worked with Newcastle University and Cap-a-Pie Theatre Company to research, produce and perform a play commemorating the First World War. The work was inspired by the archive of a local soldier, Thomas Baker Brown, which is held in our Special Collections.

The eight-day long project kicked off with The Time Bandits, an historical



interpretation group, who visited the children in school to teach them about the First World War.

'The thing I enjoyed the most about today was meeting new people and learning new things.'

Special Collections and Comics

Next, the children visited Newcastle University Library, where they were able to see and handle items from Thomas Baker Brown's archive including his signaller's badges, a matchbox, the comics he collected, and some of the letters he wrote home to his family.

The children then worked with comic artist Lydia Wysocki to create their own

comics based on the information they had learnt from the archive.

'My favourite item in the Thomas Baker Brown archive was the photo of Thomas in his uniform because it meant I could see what he looked like and that makes it all very real.'

'The thing I enjoyed most about today was that we touched really old things!'

Writing and Performing

Back at school, the children worked with Cap-a-Pie Theatre Company for a week to co-write and produce their own play about Thomas Baker Brown. To round off the project, the children performed their play to their families at Whitley Bay Playhouse on 12th November, the day after Armistice Day.

'The thing I have enjoyed most so far about working Cap-a-Pie Theatre Company is doing the soundscape because it was super fun!'



'Cap-a-Pie theatre company just make it all very enjoyable, like somehow they just make you so happy!'

'I am most looking forward to performing my play at Whitley Bay Playhouse because of being in front of people doing drama and because my mum will be so proud!'

The students even got a mention in the Evening Chronicle!

You can see films of the children preparing for and performing their play on the University Library website:

<https://www.ncl.ac.uk/library/services/education-outreach/projects/thomas-baker-brown>

Current Exhibitions

Leonard Evetts: Letting in the Light

Our current exhibition in the Marjorie Robinson Library Rooms showcases the archive of world renowned artist and designer Leonard Evetts (1909 – 1997), whose archive has been donated to Newcastle University Library Special Collections. A designer, painter, calligrapher, author, and teacher, Evetts is perhaps best known as a master in the design of stained glass windows. The most prolific English church window designer of the 20th Century, he created over 400 works of stained glass in his lifetime.



Evetts firmly believed that windows should 'let the light in' and disliked the dark effect of the traditional Victorian windows found in many English churches. He conceived his windows to show the play of light and shade at different times of day, with the different shifts in the weather, and even the seasonal changes in the trees and foliage surrounding his windows.

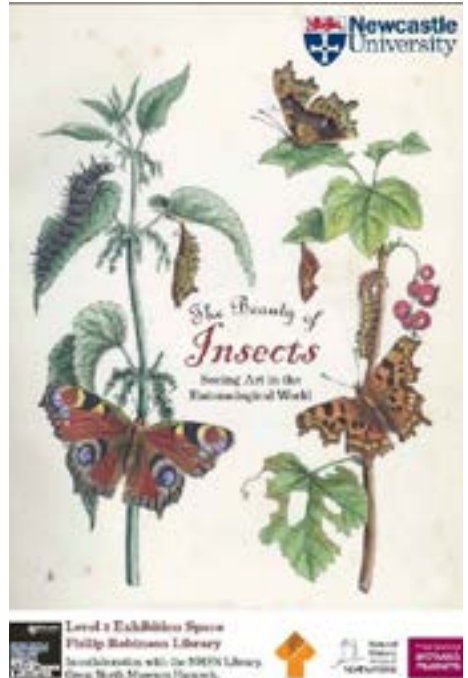


Our exhibition features works which span his range of expertise. From some of the beautiful windows we can find locally here in Newcastle to examples of his work overseas. It also includes glass work, textile work, watercolours and letters from his time as Head of Design here at Newcastle University.

The Beauty of Insects: Seeing Art in the Entomological World

In the Philip Robinson Library, 'The Beauty of Insects: Seeing Art in the Entomological World' is currently on display on Level 2. This exhibition was curated by two MA Art Museum and Gallery Studies placement students. The Library aims to give Newcastle University students opportunities to curate exhibitions so that they can gain some hands-on experience during their degree.

'The Beauty of Insects: Seeing Art in the Entomological World' brings together scientific entomology books and literary work, scientific entomology books and literary works, using colourful illustrations, fables and poetry about these small creatures.



It aims to show that insects can be appreciated for their beauty and that science and art are not complete opposites, as they often coexist.

The exhibition is a collaboration with the Natural History Society of Northumbria Library, where the students have also curated the exhibition 'The Beauty of Plant Science: Seeing Art in Botany', which is on display in the Library at the Great North Museum: Hancock.



*a pint of sweat, a brick and a nail
and you'll have a house in a week
and you'll have a house in a week
and you'll have a house in a week*



**Made in Newcastle:
The Sir Terry Farrell
Archive**

Plans are well underway to create a brand new archival store at our Team Valley Research Reserve to house the Sir Terry Farrell Archive.

Sir Terry, a Newcastle University architecture graduate, is the man behind the iconic MI6 Building in London and many other award-winning projects including The Deep in Hull and the Embankment Place office development above Charing Cross station. Closer to home, he also refurbished and extended the Great North Museum and designed the Centre for Life.

His archive is made up of thousands of items representing 60 years of practice, including models, drawings, papers and diaries. It will be curated by Special Collections in a custom built store at our Team Valley site.

The archive is made up of thousands of items representing 60 years of practice.

Alongside the archive, Sir Terry has donated £1 million to the University to create a major new exhibition centre and urban room. This will allow the archive and other examples of pioneering architecture and urban design to be showcased in the Sir Terry Farrell Building, formerly known as the



Sir Terry Farrell and Professor Chris Day, our Vice-Chancellor and President

Claremont Building, on the corner of Barras Bridge and Claremont Road.

We were delighted to welcome Sir Terry to the Library in October, where he delivered a masterclass to students and formally announced the donations with our Vice Chancellor and President, Professor Chris Day, and Director of Academic Services and University Librarian, Jill Taylor-Roe, in attendance.

When the store is completed towards the end of 2019, we will be busy transferring the archive from its present home in London and Kent. We are in the process of recruiting a Project Archivist to curate the collection. The Library is delighted to be building on its collection strengths in this area with the acquisition of such a prestigious archive and look forward to working on it with colleagues in the School of Architecture, Planning, and Landscape.

A New Lens for Gertrude Bell

Following the landmark news in 2017 that the archive of explorer, archaeologist, and political agent Gertrude Bell had been added to the UNESCO Memory of the World listing, this extraordinary archive continues to generate interest.

In January 2019, Gertrude Bell was highlighted in a new history series for BBC Two profiling great people from seven different fields of human endeavour. She was named alongside Neil Armstrong, Jane Goodall and Ernest Shackleton, with the archive providing much of the context around her legacy in the Middle East.

Safeguarding and Celebrating

We work in close partnership with our co-curators in the School of History, Classics and Archaeology and we are keen to ensure that this unique heritage is safeguarded for future generations. As part of this programme,



our colleagues at Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums have now completed fresh conservation of the 7,000 photographic negatives which document Gertrude's travels across the world.

In parallel with this work, a generous private donation has funded a new project to re-digitise the photographic archive. These images are currently displayed on a dedicated website visited by over 300,000 people a year. However, technological and curatorial advances mean that the original digitisation from the 1990s can now be enhanced to deliver much higher quality surrogates.

Our Project Digitisation Assistant, Graham Robson, will busy for the next two years creating these new digital resources, which will help to showcase and safeguard this world class collection.



Customer Services 2018-19 at a Glance

StudyWell@NCL

The exam period is one of the busiest and most stressful times in the University calendar. After consulting a wide-range of students, we confirmed that during the assessment period, they want peace and quiet, clean bookable study spaces and 24/7 access to the library (so far, so traditional). However, we discovered that students also need snippets of downtime and if necessary, someone to talk to. And so, StudyWell@Ncl was born. It developed from our previous "Clean and Quiet" exam provision and gave Customer Services the opportunity to work in partnership with Newcastle University IT Service, Newcastle University Students Union's Welfare Equality Officer and the University Chaplaincy

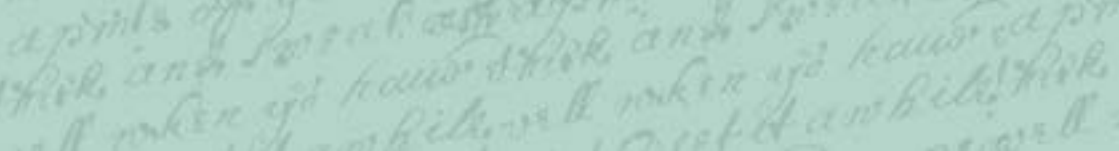


to advocate a responsible approach to studying and encourage positive behaviours in study spaces. StudyWell took a holistic and collaborative approach, and signposted students to information to help them make the right choices for their studies and wellbeing.

During the exam period, we offered a range of services, resources and procedures under the Study Well banner, some of which were the traditional and necessary library services, such as a noise alert service, bookable study spaces and housekeeping sweeps.

However, others were more unusual, for example, drop-in sessions for origami, desk yoga and a poetry



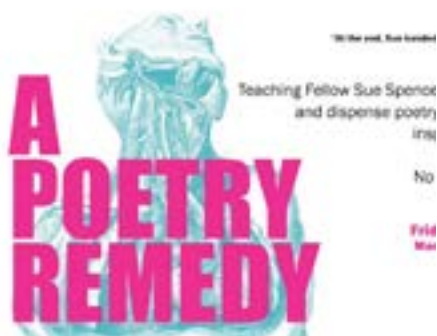


remedy (in partnership with Combined Honours Teaching fellow Susan Spencer).

All the activities were designed to give students much needed short breaks to keep their minds sharp and bodies in peak condition. We also developed an online resource so that we could guide students to quality information on exercise, study skills and nutrition. We even had a food bank donation point in the Library during this time so students could give back to the community. We received excellent feedback on the scheme so we will be looking to continue and improve this service for future exam periods.

Loan Policy Changes

Following 18 months of consultation and planning, the Library has changed its policy for borrowing long loan items



so that Library users will no longer pay overdue charges on items that no one else needs.

The highlights of the policy changes are:

- You can keep long loan items for as long as you need then (unless someone else reserves them)
- The Library will tell you when your book is due back.
- You need to reserve a book on loan if you want to borrow it.

We hope that these changes to the policy will remove what can sometimes be perceived as a punitive charge on overdue books that are not required by others. At the same time, by increasing the charge on items returned late that *are* required by others, we hope that this will be a greater incentive to return these books promptly. We will be monitoring this policy change closely over the next few months.

RFID...Or Radio Frequency Identification

This summer, the Library replaced its existing self-service infrastructure in the Philip Robinson, Walton and Law libraries with a radio-frequency identification (RFID) solution that will deliver many benefits for Library users and for Library workflows. RFID uses a wireless radio system to transfer data from a tag attached to a book which can then be read by an RFID scanner.

A tag for everything

The main issue with implementing RFID, is that there is no halfway house between security solutions, therefore all of our active stock had to be retro-converted and issued with RFID tags. A specialist external team spent most of July and August putting RFID tags in every book in the Walton, Law and Philip Robinson Libraries. If you saw the team around the Libraries, it was rather hypnotic to watch them work – they had the tagging down to a fine and very quick art.

The Walton and Law Library stock (c. 62,000 items) was tagged in just seven days and the Philip Robinson stock (c. 525,000 items) were tagged in less than a month.



Multiple benefits

One of the most obvious advantages of RFID for library users is the ability to issue or return multiple items at a time, rather than having to scan each barcode individually. For staff, the Philip Robinson Library now benefits from an automatic book sorter, where items are sorted via a conveyor belt into separate book bins for quick and easy transportation to the subject floors. And there are further innovations, such as intelligent trolleys and self-service reservations that we may be able to take advantage of in the future.

...in Literature: promoting reading for pleasure in Law and Medicine

Law in Literature and Medicine in Literature are sister collections of novels, short stories, plays, poetry, graphic novels and films found in the Law and Walton Libraries. Both collections contain titles that relate to law or medicine in some way and contain a diverse range of voices and stories. They play an important part in their respective libraries in supporting and promoting reading for pleasure and wellbeing, as well as expanding knowledge and awareness.

Law in Literature was developed in the summer of 2018, while Medicine in Literature has existed for some years but has undergone a revamp in the last year. They have been developed in collaboration with staff and



students and we always welcome new recommendations.

Our ...in Literature collections provide an interdisciplinary view on Medicine and Law, bringing a human dimension to the practice of each discipline. The collections are intended to be thought provoking and engaging, and we hope that they stimulate discussion and debate about what it is to be human.

Take a look at our guides, where you can find out what we have on our shelves and make a recommendation to be added to the collection:

<https://libguides.ncl.ac.uk/lawinliterature/>

<https://libguides.ncl.ac.uk/medicineinliterature>



Library Success at LILAC 2019

In Spring 2019, the Library received national recognition for the transformative digital work that the Academic Liaison team has undertaken to improve the reach, quality and impact of their Information Literacy (IL) and research skills teaching. The team has been working with students and a Learning Technologist to design and create a suite of original, student-focused and engaging IL online resources, and, in collaboration with academic colleagues, has begun to embed and offer them as part of different learning experiences.

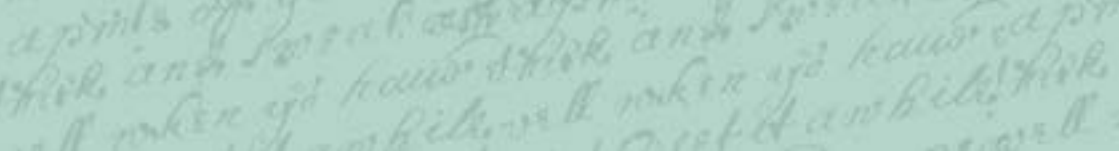
Digital Innovation

Learning developer, Dr Terry Charlton, won the Digital Award for Information Literacy, which rewards an innovative and high impact digital resource in the field. Terry worked with the Library's Academic Liaison team to produce a portfolio of innovative online education resources including a series of videos covering topics such as literature reviews and finding and evaluating information. One of the judges, Karen Reedy (Open University), commented

"We particularly liked the research Terry and the Newcastle team had done to understand student needs and preferences, and the convincing evidence of impact, demonstrated through impressive usage figures and integration of the resources into teaching."

In addition, the Academic Liaison team was runner-up in the Information Literacy Award, which recognises an outstanding achievement in the field of information literacy. The team was commended for its excellent work in transforming the credit-bearing postgraduate information skills module (HSS8002) into a high quality blended learning experience.





For this project, the team worked with colleagues in the University's Learning and Teaching Development Service to produce an online module, complemented with face-to-face lectures and workshops.

Student-led learning

The course enables students to choose their own pathway through a wide range of information skills topics, including finding and managing information, as well as contemporary issues such as open access, fake news and social media. An interactive skills checker allows students to measure

their confidence before and after the module, so they can focus on those areas that will most assist them with their research.

The positive impact of this new approach was confirmed in the increased quality of assessments submitted, the improved student 'overall satisfaction' rating from 3.8 to 4.1 (on a scale of 1-5) and high praise from an external examiner who would like something similar introduced at his institution.



Anne Archer, Emily Dott, Dr Terry Charlton, Lorna Smith

And a THELMA Nomination!



We are delighted that the Academic Liaison Team and Dr Terry Charlton have also been shortlisted for a Times Higher Education Leadership and Management Award in the category Outstanding Library Team for the transformation of information literacy with innovative online resources. We will find out whether the team has won the award at the end of November but whatever the result the nomination is already a great achievement.



Newcastle Beginnings: Your Academic Headstart

The Library has long played an important role in supporting new students as they make the transition to university level study. Our activities include the Welcome campaign to help students feel at home in the library space, the academic skills teaching provided by the Writing Development Centre and the Academic Liaison team throughout the first term and beyond, as well as online resources that students can access whenever they need.

Stepping up to university study

This year, Newcastle University introduced an initiative to bring this and other aspects of its induction provision together, and extend our support into the summer, before students arrive. *Newcastle Beginnings: Your Academic*



Headstart is an online course for new undergraduate students who have got their A-level results and their place at Newcastle and are wondering what to expect during the step up to university study.

The project was led jointly by the Writing Development Centre and the Learning and Teaching Development Service and was developed in close collaboration with the Students' Union. Concentrating on academic rather than social transition, students explore 'Where You'll be for Learning' (Lectures), 'Where You'll Find Learning' (Libraries), 'Where You'll Do Learning' (Seminars, Labs, Workshops) and 'Where You'll Show Your Learning'.

The ethos of the course is very student-centred. Rather than tell them what they need to or must or should do, participants explore what it is

like to study at Newcastle University, and are encouraged to reflect, ask questions and set themselves goals for when they arrive. The student voice is central, with student guides showing them round the university learning environment, student vox pops sharing experiences, tips and insights, and student mentors online to answer any questions.

Prepared to participate

Of course, there is a limit to how much can be achieved before students even get here. The aim of the course was not to make students 'uni-ready' but to give them a 'heads up' about what to expect and find out more about the

various sources of support, including the Library, Writing Development Centre and the student peer mentoring scheme. Once they arrive, they should be primed to participate fully in the induction activities run around the university, including in the library.

The online course is created on the Futurelearn MOOC platform, and will remain available to students until Christmas, so they can refer back to it where needed. The project will be fully evaluated, but we currently have over a thousand students who have signed up. We hope it helps them make a smoother transition to their university studies once they arrive.

14 Choose a lecture theatre



Philip Robinson Library Refurbishment

This Summer, the library made significant improvements to the entrance and adjacent areas of the Philip Robinson Library. This included the creation of new Welcome and Library Help desks, the installation of accessible exit and security gates, the launch of new self-service kiosks for the issue of library materials and the creation of a separate book return area to help streamline processes,

The Student Texts Collection area (heavy demand or essential course reading items that can only be borrowed for a maximum of four hours) has also been moved to a

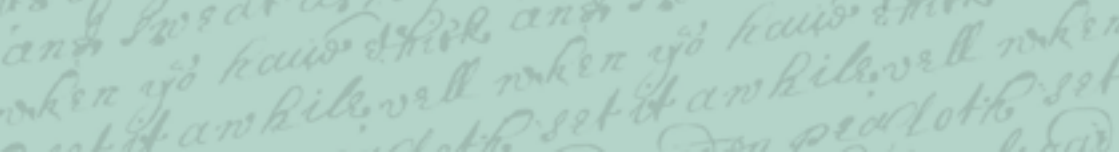


more prominent location in order to present a more dynamic collection in a more inviting space. Finally, the social learning and collaborative study spaces have been enlarged and improved.

Staff area and cafe improvements

In addition, the open plan staff working space on Level 2 was updated with the intention of creating a quieter working environment and with the introduction of new fit-for-purpose height adjustable desks and chairs.





At the same time, the University Catering Service, Eat@, took the opportunity to refurbish the café area so that it is now a much more stylish and functional space.

What's next?

The next phase of this refurbishment will be the creation of a more visible and dynamic Exhibition Space for the display of materials from the University Library's Special Collections and Archives.



Young People's Poetry Prize

This year the Friends of the University Library sponsored a new award for Young People's Poetry, which was run as part of the annual Newcastle Poetry Festival.

Entries were invited from poets aged between 11 and 17. There were a lot of impressive entries but the judge of the prize, poet Phoebe Power, could only select 12 winning poems. The winners were then invited to appear at a special event at the Newcastle Poetry Festival and received a £25 book voucher.

The winners and their prize-winning poems are published below.

Zeinab Altahair The Pressure of Love

*Your eyes are (glass)y
Like a mouth ajar (crack)ling
Spits tears through its (open)ing*

*And you now (under)stand
That this thing of (great)ness
Is love being light(weight)*

Ide Crawford Ammonite

*Dizzying hair's breadth height
This tiny swirl of time,
Seen like a shadow
In the dead grey rock*

*Rock split
In two halves*

*The dry tight curl
A stir of lost life.
The change from flesh to stone
Has made one speck of being
The skein of all the fallen years*

Wound up



Mishka Bari-Jones **My Grandmother's Stories**

*When I ask her of her past
It seems so beautiful
She tells me of her snakeskin wedges
On her wedding day
Glee as the vicar called out
"You may kiss the bride!"*

*When I ask her of her past
It seems so exciting
Watching her friend with her camera
Not realising that the school coach had
left
Leaving them stranded by the golden
fountain
In the middle of London*

*When I ask her of her past
It seems so daring
Walking in pairs to the swimming baths
But two girls were not present in the pool
And were instead having lunch
Only to join with the class on their way
back*

*When I ask her of her past
It seems so carefree
New Year's day with a son and daughter
Drunk on schnapps, listening to Top of
the Pops
Not to mention dancing (very badly) on
the table
Before passing out in a favourite rocking
chair*

*When she asks me of my past
I ask, why?
You've been there the whole time
There's nothing you don't know
And I'll always tell you my stories
Because you told me yours.*

Izzy Hammer **I wish**

*I wish I had no fear
I wish I had teleportation
I wish I had a Basset Hound
I wish I had a lizard
I wish I had a job as a zookeeper
I wish I had a baby brother
I wish I had a forever home
I wish I had all of my fish*

Dorit Greene **Muddled**

*In the middle of the Atlantic
Lives bad news
A whale
Wistfully singing
Through the storm
Of cold
And unmade beds
Which twinkle
Under the sea
Which tilts
Like a haunted nursery rhyme*

Elisa Hislop Home

*A pretty parcel
Wrapped up in red.
Before me the bow comes
Away like burned skin and
The paper, retorting in
Agony, reveals a perfect
Little house; the teacups
Tilted in the minute
Sideboard drawer. Tiny neat
Beds, soaked in scarlet
And haunted by scathing portieres
And as light pours in through frosted
Glass the mother in the kitchen
Takes to her mouth a poisoned chalice.
Daddy isn't here. And you, a skeletal
Frame on which clothes hang,
Stand - ourselves separated by
A universe.*

Barney Webb Whispers

*Listening to music on headphones,
Suddenly the world is behind you,
Burrowed in the back of your brain,
Calling, blaming, teasing, howling.
Who puts this in a song?*

Barney Webb secrets

*secrets shine through.
needles
prick
holes between the
sheets of days
gone by
and here we are
ghosts hiding
underneath
wishing on our
constellations.*

Maud Webster Foliage

*leafy green pokes itself from the piss-
patched slabs
rest their fertile fuzz upon the sidewalk
emerald anarchists reclaiming order
if i lay
perch my palms under the fierce foliage
would it clutch my little fingers
and hold on forever?*

Sydney Wright

The Wait

We wait. We wait
For the turn of a blank page
At the end of a book.
For the final chapter that
Fell to the press of a
Backspace.

Space, empty space beckons,
Hanging around the
Corner, like a dewdrop
Dangling from a window ledge.

We wait to hear
The distant sound of a bucket,
Coming to rest far from the
Home from which it was kicked,
To hear the silence as it falls still
To hear it drowned out by life.

Bethany Smithson

Dearest Dolores

Dearest Dolores on porcelain pins
Wobbling and nervous, her doll-like
limbs
Twitch with a hatred that personifies
In the deep, dark sea of her flitting eyes.

Her smell of rose perfume, and dusty old
books,

Her aura of antique elegance, looks
Pale lilac in the twilight air, as
Light scatters across her moonless hair.

Thomas Probyn

August 11th 1980

August 11th 1980.
The blue, the black, the cadmium yellow,
They'd said the crossing was fine; no one
really knew.

All apart from a 40 tonne loco, rumbling
towards it at unstoppable speed.
The smell of fresh fish in the market, a
duck crossing, as if to test the water.

A quiet screaming started up, the
screaming of a scared new train.
In a flash of cadmium yellow, it rolled
from the safety of its hillside cave, one
pantographic

Arm straggling to be free.
It took its aspect and began the journey,
slowly edging across the bridge.

Before we knew it, it was over, no more
black and yellow.

Just the sweet ringing of success.

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