

MLA West Midlands relocates to new offices



Left to right: Tony Jones, Senior Partner at Shakespeares (property lease holders to MLA); Kathy Gee, Chief Executive of MLA West Midlands; Geoff Warren, Development Director of MLA West Midlands.

MLA West Midlands – People and Places

MLA West Midlands new offices are now open for business at 14 Bennetts Hill, Birmingham. You should have received either a leaflet or an email version telling you how to get to us and who to contact – but please let us know if you would like to receive another copy. Moving was

not unadulterated joy as we spent several days without phones and e-mail, but everything is now up and running.

Unfortunately, no sooner had we printed the leaflet than it was out of date. Heather Williamson (Knowledge Development Manager of MLA) is leaving us to take up the post at the National Electronic Library for Health (NeLH), as Information Manager within the NHS Information Authority, based in Birmingham. We wish her all the best in her new role and are sad to see her go. The post of Knowledge Development Manager has been advertised nationally with a closing date of Mon 13th Oct. We are also recruiting for three new posts – the Access and Learning Development Officer; the Standards and Stewardship Officer – and Learning Development Officer as maternity cover for Elizabeth Roberts who goes on maternity leave October 9th. We look forward to a birth announcement in mid November!

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Regional News

Archives Awareness Month – September and beyond

September saw the introduction of the first national Archives Awareness Month the first phase of a wider Archives Awareness Campaign orchestrated by The National Council on Archives. To raise the profile of the archives domain amongst the general public, potential partners, politicians, decision makers and funding bodies; encourage new users and a wider user base; change the image of the domain and the archive profession and involve the archival community in its broadest sense to develop a greater sense of confidence and mutual support.

Many open days, exhibitions and other events took place during September throughout the UK and in the West Midlands region. On Thursday 4th December MLA will be hosting a seminar reviewing AAM, featuring presentations on national and regional events from both the West Midlands and the other English regions. This event will be a chance to see what happened, how events were put together and to assess the impact of the campaign. It will also be an opportunity to explore how to build on the month and how libraries, museums and other services can get involved in the future.

All staff from across the sector are invited to attend – please see the separate *Figuring the nature of the times deceased* event flyer attached to the newsletter.

For further detail contact:

Philip Kiberd, Content Co-ordination Officer
0121-631-5822

philip.kiberd@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

Museum closedown for development project

The Waterworks Museum – Hereford closed down at the end of August for refurbishment. Backing for the new project was won from the Heritage Lottery Fund along with support from English Heritage and Dwr Cymru Welsh Water.

The new centre will provide education facilities from primary level to lifelong learning. Temporary exhibitions and displays will become a regular feature. New spaces will be created including a gallery for smaller working engines and a proper workshop for the Museum's volunteer engineering team.

The existing main building, which is both listed and a Scheduled Ancient Monument, will be refurbished as part of the whole development. It

was the Victorian water-pumping station for Hereford, begun in 1856 with additions up to 1906 and it retains the authentic Victorian atmosphere of a municipal industrial building and the main triple-expansion steam engine is the largest of its type still working in Britain.

The museum will re-open in the summer of 2004.

www.waterworksmuseum.org.uk

Workforce Development / Training

MLA West Midlands Pilot Bursary Scheme

MLA West Midlands has set aside £5000 for training bursaries. The scheme has been set up to enable organisations with limited training budgets to in part meet the costs of providing training opportunities for their staff. (see enclosed flyer). To access the bursaries you are required to fill in a simple application form and return with the details of the course you wish to attend to:

Mark Hinsley

Workforce Development Officer

0121 631 5819

mark.hinsley@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

To obtain an application form contact:

lee.perry@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

CSV's Make A Difference Day

October 25th 2003

Make A Difference Day is the UK's single biggest day of volunteering action. Last year 63,000 people took part and gave up their time to benefit their company in some way, 36% of these were new to volunteering. This is a fantastic opportunity for groups to recruit new volunteers, raise awareness of their work within the community and also attract local and national media attention. In 2002 the day received an estimated £1.5 million worth of media attention, with 76% of all activities getting medial coverage.

For more information visit:

www.csv.org.uk/difference

Also see enclosed leaflet.

Learning and Access

HLF Pay-out gives more Power to Archives

A big step to alleviating the problem of uncatalogued archive collections was taken in September when HLF awarded the region a **£378,000 grant** towards a regional project to

catalogue and promote collections from West Midlands' archives. The **Pay & Power** project will over 3 years, catalogue 17 collections from local offices in the region, making a wealth of information on the political and economic development of the region since the 12th Century available to users of all kinds. MLA West Midlands will administer the project and host the project team during the 3 years, whilst a management board will be drawn from the offices involved. In addition to cataloguing, the project will develop and run a series of outreach activities within the West Midlands region and beyond.

For more information contact:
Philip Kiberd, Content Co-ordination Officer
0121 631 5822
philip.kiberd@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

The Big Draw!

This imaginative, engaging and enjoyable event runs throughout October (main focus 15th-22nd) at 1000 venues across the UK. Previous Big Draws picked up two records – for the longest drawing in the world (1km) and for the most people drawing simultaneously (over 7000). Shopping malls, science centres, village halls, museums, galleries, industrial mills, hospitals, schools and libraries are some of the places offering free drawing events for all-comers. No expertise is required – just a suspension of inhibitions and a willingness to experiment with everything from pens, pencils and paper to chalk, charcoal, mud, ink, fire, sand, digital imagery, camera obscura, whiteboards and water.

For details of how to take part in The Big Draw, visit: www.drawingpower.org.uk

Children's Museums Site

The Children's Museums Site has been redeveloped. The site is non-commercial and is aimed towards children and teachers. It is entirely free to use, consisting of online interactivities, games and resources generated by the UK's museum, gallery and heritage sector.

Visit the website at: www.show.me.uk

24 Hour Museum – Newsfeed Service

The 24 Hour Museum website has developed a free newsfeed service to spread the word about UK museums, galleries and heritage attractions even further round the world wide web and offers at least two museum and gallery stories every day. It is an independent charity funded by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport

(DCMS) through Resource, the Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries. The site's growing database includes over 2,800 museums, galleries and heritage attractions.

www.24hourmuseum.org.uk

BT Education Programme

BT has announced that the BT Education Programme has now been revamped and relaunched for the new school year.

Visit the site for lots of fresh features in an easy to use format at:

www.btplc.com/ict

Funding

Much of the MLA's Funding Team's time has been spent on reviewing the current Development Fund Pilot Programme. The Development Fund Panel met on the 19th September and is recommending a new programme which is being circulated as a Consultation Paper across the three domains. General comments are welcomed but particularly on the proposed changes which include: a more strategic two year theme of Workforce Development, a rolling grants programme which addresses areas of service development and a stronger emphasis of partnership working. The recommended new programme will be presented at the November Board meeting and we are hoping to distribute application forms in December 2003 with a mid-February deadline.

Other work has focused on developing a list of regional and national funding sources which will feed into the national funding database currently being undertaken by consultants and overseen by SEMLAC. Recent meetings with Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and Advantage West Midlands (AWM) have greatly assisted MLA West Midlands in developing a new funding programme.

Geoff Warren, Development Director
0121 631 5805

geoff.warren@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

Carl Franklin, Funding Advisor
0121 631 5806

carl.franklin@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

West Midlands Working Together

West Midlands Working Together is the new European Structural Funding identity which has been working on a communications campaign to

make sure the information provided is accessible and easy to understand for everyone in the public, private and volunteer sectors. The new website is the result of taking into account the improvements that many people suggested. The site can still be accessed through the GOWM website but you can also access it directly through its new address:

www.westmidlandsworkingtogether.org.uk

ICT Issues

UK Central Government Web Archive

The National Archives of the UK have announced the launch of a new archive of UK Central Government websites.

Over half of all interaction between the government and the public is now carried out online. This new initiative will collect and preserve 50 government websites, including the Hutton Inquiry, 10 Downing Street and the Northern Ireland Office. Sites are being collected as weekly or six monthly snapshots, using a specially – modified version of the Internet Archive's web crawler. The complete archive is being made available on the web and in the National Archives' public search rooms at Kew.

Visit the website at: www.pro.gov.uk/webarchive

ICT Network

MLA is reviving the ICT Network. Previously a focus for museums this will be widened to the whole sector. A meeting will take place in December to discuss the format of the group and further details will be placed in the next MLA Newsletter.

Philip Kiberd
Content Co-ordination Officer
0121 631 5822

philip.kiberd@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

Digitisation

Digitisation and the development of e-content is a big agenda for our sector and is likely to increase in importance in years to come. MLA's Knowledge Team is currently mapping regional activity in this area. If you have completed a project recently, are embarking on one soon, planning one or just interested in developing a project idea, we would like to hear from you.

Please send details of your project or request a form listing the information we are collecting by contacting:

Philip Kiberd
Content Co-ordination Officer
0121 631 5822

philip.kiberd@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

Advantage West Midlands Libraries Challenge Project

This £1m project to increase the take up of Broadband services by improving the quality and quantity of regional libraries' content is now well under way. The five consortia projects, BITS for All, Chrysalis, Creation Zone, Shropshire Routes to Roots and Ticked to Find are working to deliver economic advantage through support for business, learning and skills development and local history and cultural identity. All five projects are now all fully resourced and progressing well with content creation. Investigations are also ongoing in terms of establishing a long-term partnership with the Media Vault, Technology Innovation Centre (based at UCE) to store and maintain project content.

Visit the project website at:

www.wm-libraries.org.uk/AWMLC/awmlc.htm

or contact:

Stephen Fuller, AWMLC Project Officer
0121 631 5804

stephen.fuller@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

Revolutionary Players

Revolutionary Players was created in 2002. Financed by the New Opportunities Fund, the project is creating a website presenting and exploring resources from archives, museums and libraries across the counties of Herefordshire, Derbyshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire. The website focuses on the Midlands during the Industrial Revolution in the 18th and early 19th centuries and has now "gone live". Formerly managed within The Libraries Partnership – West Midlands, Revolutionary Players is currently directed within the regional programme of Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery. We welcome advice to help us develop the site as we create more resources.

Visit the website at:

www.revolutionaryplayers.org.uk

Contact:

Dr Malcolm Dick, Project Manager
0121 464 0578

Malcolm.dick@birmingham.gov.uk

Museums and Galleries month 2004

Start planning now! The dates are 1st – 31st May 2004. MGM are planning a number of

improvements to the events search on the MGM website. These will go into effect in January when the events pages “go live”. In the meantime, you might consider becoming a direct data entry client on the 24 Hour Museum. It means that you can update your information all the year round and that includes for Museums and Galleries Month.

Find out how on:

www.24hourmuseum.org.uk and click on Museums.

The MGM website has now been updated with a new home page and organisers’ section – visit: www.may2004.org.uk

Resource

New Appointments at Resource

- Jonathan Douglas has joined Resource: as Head of Learning and Access. He will roll out and take forward Resource’s programme to make learning accessible in museums, archives and libraries.
- Gina Lane been appointed by Resource to act as a high profile advocate for collections, standards and workforce development within museums, archives and libraries and government.
- Nick Poole has been appointed as Regional Policy Advisor.
- David Crowther has been appointed as Project Director and will act as an advocate and oversee the implementation of the Renaissance in the Regions project.

www.resource.gov.uk

Resource launches Action Plan for Public Libraries

Resource has launched an Action Plan that will see public libraries across England transformed into centres of knowledge, learning, creativity and inspiration.

Delivery of the Action Plan will clearly involve MLA West Midlands in many areas, some of which are yet to be defined but our relationship with the business community will clearly assist in demonstrating the economic value of libraries. The roll out of INSPIRE and application of the Inspiring Learning Framework are further important aspects of the Action Plan which will be led by the Regional Agencies.

Framework for the Future was launched by the government in February 2003. It’s vision for public libraries, with the aim to promote them,

sets out why libraries matter to everyone and illustrate how they can best serve their communities in the 21st Century.

At the heart of the vision is the promotion of reading and informal learning; access to digital skills and services including e-government and measures to tackle social exclusion, build community identity and develop citizenship. The three year Action Plan prepared by Resource and developed with a wide range of partners, aims to help library services to achieve the Framework vision. It presents a range of projects and programmes covering the three key development themes for public libraries. These themes are:

Books, reading and learning – Libraries can provide an informal, supportive and stimulating environment and can encourage reading and provide access to learning for everyone.

Digital citizenship – Libraries enable all citizens to have access to information and services and are central to the delivery of electronic government.

Community and civic values – Libraries are safe, welcoming, neutral spaces open to all the community. They are particularly well-placed to engage hard-to-reach groups, working with education, social, health and leisure services.

Implementation of Framework for the Future has already begun and by the end of March 2004 the first results of the plan will be achieved.

For a full report visit:

www.resource.gov.uk/action/framework/framework.asp

MLA West Midlands contact:

Geoff Warren, Development Director.

0121 631 5805

geoff.warren@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

Collections and Stewardship

Conservation Survey

The MLA West Midlands Knowledge Team is currently undertaking an audit of conservation facilities and expertise in the region. We are interested in whether you contract out conservation work, whether this is within the region and how you rate the following areas in order of priority as a local or regional need:-

1. Infrastructure & Equipment.
2. Networking and Skills sharing.
3. Increasing staff capacity and training opportunities.

If you wish to forward any conservation details or comment on local or regional needs please feel free to contact:

Philip Kiberd
Content Co-Ordination Officer
Tel: 0121 631 5822

philip.kiberd@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

Professional Accreditation and the Conservation Register

A promotional tour on PACR is travelling the country during 2003/04. The programme includes:

- short presentations on what is involved in PACR accreditation and the Conservation Register.
- an accredited conservator's perspective on PACR.
- a practice on the Register (or an organisation that has used the Register) offering their point of view.
- an update on progress towards the establishment, in 2004, of a new unified professional body that will provide a focus for conservation and collection care activity across the whole of the UK.
- an optional tour to view the conservation studio of the hosting venue.

The tour reaches the West Midlands on 7th April 2004 and will be held at the Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery.

To obtain a full programme, all venue details and to book a place please contact: Susan Bradshaw.

Tel: 01626 824510

Email: susan.bradshaw@pacr.org.uk

Download: www.pacr.org.uk

National News

WW2 People's War

The BBC are inviting organisations to participate in the WW2 People's War nationwide launch this November.

The BBC is developing a national web site to help people discover, share and write their personal history from World War Two. Their aim is to record the wartime experiences of the many ordinary people who struggled at the home front and on the front line and to help build a unique record of a nation at war.

In November (3rd-16th) – linked to the Remembrance commemorations – there will be a nationwide launch of BBC WW2 People's War site when they will be encouraging their

audiences to share and record their World War Two stories on the web site. To mark the occasion, there will be national broadcast and local radio coverage, a national press launch and story gathering events across the country.

The BBC are looking for organisations that have experience of working with older people (perhaps through reminiscence groups) and who might be able to support non-confident computer users in posting their stories on the the BBC web site.

Keith Benton
Regional Learning Project Manager
Tel: 0121 432 8134
keith.benton@bbc.co.uk

For an application form and more information email:

caspar.mason@bbc.co.uk

(quoting 'WW2/NIACE')

or telephone: 020 8752 5772

To visit the website go to:

www.bbc.co.uk/ww2

Publications

Connecting Time

The West Midlands Regional Archive Council produced a publicity document which provides a short insight into archive collections, offices and activities. Limited copies are available free by contacting:

Philip Kiberd, Content Coordination Officer
0121 631 5822
philip.kiberd@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

Talking Images Research.

This publication provides a summary of the findings of the research studies undertaken for the project. Talking Images project focused specifically on the use of audio description in museums, galleries and heritage sites and was a collaboration between Royal National Institute of the Blind (RNIB) and Vocaleyes.

£5.95.

Talking Images Guide.

A comprehensive and practical overview of how to improve access for blind and partially sighted people based on the findings of the Talking Images project (see above). It covers all areas of access from planning to service delivery and evaluation.

£9.95.

Both publications: £14.50.

Publications are available in print, tape or Braille from:

RNIB Customer Services – 0845 702 3153
email: cservices@rnib.org.uk

Archives and the User No 10

The British Records Association is pleased to announce the publication of No 10 in the series Archives and the User: Documenting the History of Houses by N W Alcock.

£9.50.

For details and order form, see:

www.hmc.gov.uk/bra/publication_pages/AandUser.htm#Housing

Cultural Volunteer

Cultural volunteer (cv) is a free e-news and information service published six times a year for arts management professionals. You can choose to read cv in email or as a Word document.

To subscribe to cv visit:

www.lynnblackadder.com

Help in Meeting the Disability Discrimination Act

As the DDA comes into full force in October 2004 and will affect every organisation whatever the size, Resource has developed a range of publications to help you, from a self-assessment toolkit to a set of new guidelines. The Disability Portfolio is a collection of 12 guides on how best to meet the needs of disabled people as users and staff in museums, archives and libraries.

For more information and copies of the publications see:

www.resource.gov.uk/action/learnacc/00access_03.asp

MLA West Midlands contact:

Lesley-Anne Kerr

Access Development Manager

0121 631 5818

lesley-anne.kerr@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

MLA Board Update

- The current Operational Plan for MLA West Midlands was presented to and approved by the Board in September 2003. The MLA West Midlands Communications Strategy report was presented which highlighted differing needs of different parts of MLA's constituency, described the content of the strategy and shared an early analysis of:- a) types of message b) types of audience c) the resulting matrix, with members of the Board.

A copy of MLA's Operational Plan 2003 / 04 Summary is enclosed within this newsletter.

More copies are available by contacting:

Julie Bedward, Information Assistant

0121 631 5823

julie.bedward@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

- The Crossroads / Cornucopia project has been successfully completed and the contents of the Cornucopia database is now transferred to a new system based on that developed for the West Midlands Crossroads project. See:

www.cornucopia.org.uk

www.crossroads-wm.org.uk

- Due to staffing changes in MLA West Midlands, Geoff Warren, Development Director, is taking the lead on the Inspire West Midlands project: a national joint initiative between the Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Department for Education and Skills to implement the recommendations of the report *Empowering the Learning Community*.

www.lic.gov.uk/publications/policyreports/

- The Knowledge Development Team would like to thank all of you who completed and returned the questionnaire to us regarding MLA's Newsletter. Suggestions that were made have been taken into account and we aim to continually improve our newsletter.

MLA West Midlands website

The MLA website is currently an interim site and will be redeveloped shortly.

Please visit at:

www.mlawestmidlands.org.uk

Events

Some Common Bond

Another Chance to see an exhibition by Birmingham's City Archives showing Birmingham's Black International History, this time featuring some of the original Archive material on which the exhibition is based.

October 2003

**Floor 6
Birmingham
Central Library**

Basic Archive Skills Training Day

See enclosed flyer for details.

21st October 2003

**University of
Warwick Library**

Tourism & Heritage Export Showcase

In partnership with **Shropshire Chamber and Business Link** to launch Leisure and Tourism with Keynote speakers in the Museums, Heritage and Tourism Sectors.

To download a booking form go to:

www.tradepartners.gov.uk

**4th November
2003**

**Enginuity –
Ironbridge Gorge
Musuem**

Figuring the Nature of the Times Deceased

A review of regional and national activity during Archives Awareness Month. See enclosed flyer for details.

**4th December
2003**

**Birmingham and
Midland Institute**

Conservation 2004

On 8th – 9th July the UK Institute for Conservation of Historic & Artistic Works (UKIC) will host its first general conference since 1988. The conference will explore how conservators have responded to the challenges of current approaches to heritage policy and funding. It will examine fresh ideas and approaches, especially the extent to which conservators are and can become more involved in decision making.

For more information please visit:

www.ukic.org.uk

8th – 9th July 2004

**Merseyside
Maritime Museum**

Black History Month events in the West Midlands

Spooky Traditions of the World

An exhibition that will look at traditions and cultural activities from an array of countries and religions that link with, or have similarities with, Halloween and is accompanied by practical activities and workshops.

**27th-31st
October**

**Charlecote
Park**

Traveller Wagons

A free workshop in which children can make a Traveller wagon from recycled material and decorate it with traditional stencil designs.

**29th October
11.00 – 12.30
and 1.30 – 3.00**

**Hereford
Museum & Art
Gallery**

Tree Dressing

Tree dressing in the park draws on myths and stories from a spectrum of cultures.

**6th – 20th
December**

**Charlecote
Park**

MLA Newsletter Editor:

Julie Bedward, Information Assistant

Knowledge Development Team

0121 631 5823

julie.bedward@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

Please contact Julie Bedward if you:

- *wish to receive the newsletter in a different format*
- *would like it sent to another colleague*
- *do not wish to receive future issues*

julie.bedward@mlawestmidlands.org.uk