

TEEN LIBRARIAN

Monthly

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April 2009

Editorial

Welcome to the April edition of TLM! First up this month is a look at a brilliant Twilight event that was run in High Wycombe, as well as some upcoming teen-related training. There is a manga competition currently being offered in Scotland and a national search for a new illustrator for Julia 'The Gruffalo' Donaldson's new book – so if anyone knows teens that have a talent in art you may be able to point them in the direction of a lucrative new career.

Tomorrow (Thursday 16th) is Support Teen Literature Day in the USA, which is an idea that should work quite well in the UK with a bit of planning for next year. This month's *Eight Questions With...* interview is with M.G. Harris – author of the phenomenal *Joshua Files* series.

Next month is the third anniversary of TLM so if anyone would like to contribute articles of events and things they have accomplished over the past three years they will be most welcome!

On a personal note, following an 18 month restructuring of the Library Service where I work I have officially become **Teen Librarian** (as opposed to librarian who also works with teens!), which is a post that I have coveted for the past several years.

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**Twilight Evening @ High Wycombe
Headspace, Tuesday 14th April 7.30 –
9.00pm**

Judy Ottaway

The Twilight Evening was a great success. There were 11 new teenagers and a member of staff from Waterstones Bookshop who came to run quizzes with the group. The idea for this evening came from a small planning group of girls who met several times to organise the event, including the music and evaluation sheet for the evening. The date for the evening was planned to coincide with the DVD launch, which is now available for loan in the library.



Prizes of DVDs and posters were given to the quiz winners. The quizzes consisted of a 'quotes' quiz (who said what to whom) and a straightforward multiple-choice quiz: for example when did Edward Cullen become a vampire? Answer: 1918.

There was a lot of knowledge in the room and we had a tie breaker question to find an out and out winner!

The evening consisted of two quizzes, music, pizza and a photo shoot. Two cardboard cut outs were obtained from Forbidden Planet. These were placed in the 'band stand' surrounded by lights, material and balloons which made a really good backdrop for the photos. These were processed on the night, so everyone went home with their own picture with the stars.

It was a great success and everyone had a good time.

Some of the comments from the question:

What went well?

"It was really fun and lively and the cut outs were awesome!"

"The quiz and taking pictures with Edward"

"The quiz food well managed"

"Everything especially the food"

"Pretty much everything"

"The quiz and the lovely people"

"Me winning!"



What could be improved for next time?

- “More Edward posters around the library”
- “Lots of Edward Cullen cut outs – it would drive girls crazy”
- “Celebrities! Make them visit”
- “Advertise more so there are loads of people” (it was suggested that we contacted local schools and shops especially New Look)
- “It could be on every day”
- “More people”
- “Invite Robert Pattinson! Or Stephenie Meyer“ (this might prove a little difficult...)

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Upcoming Training

Boys and Reading
14 May 2009, London

Boys’ reading is back in the headlines! This new CILIP training course provides an opportunity to explore boys’ reading, how to identify effective strategies for encouragement and the role of the library in supporting this in school and public libraries.

Programme Highlights:

- * Boys attitudes to reading: facts and theories
- * Strategies to make reading more attractive
- * Suitable resources and methods for exploiting them
- * Planning: policy implications and strategies for action

FULL DETAILS: <http://bit.ly/Euik>

The Social Media Exchange
Monday 1 June 2009

On Monday 1 June sounddelivery is hosting The Social Media Exchange for the Cultural and Heritage Sectors. This practical training event is specifically aimed at staff working in museums, galleries, libraries, archives and heritage sites. The day will feature bitesize masterclasses, practical social media surgeries, discussions and collaboration and networking opportunities. This event will bring together experts in the sector who are using social media tools and who

will share their experiences with you.

You will:

- Get a solid understanding of the ‘what,’ ‘why’ and ‘how’ of social media.
- Get up to speed on the changing media climate, the increasing role of social media and how this can apply to your work.
- Be given practical examples of how podcasts, social networks, blogs, digital storytelling, twitter and other applications are actively being used in the sector.
- Meet like-minded people within the sector who are using social media tools in their work and who want to share what they have learnt with their peers.
- Actively participate in sessions and be encouraged to bring your ideas and projects to the event for development and brainstorming.

The day will include:

- 20 Interactive Masterclasses focusing on social media, journalism and storytelling.
- Practical group surgeries in blogging, podcasting, twitter, video and mobile technology.
- A panel discussion including representatives from Google.
- Liveblogging, Twittering, Live Podcast Production, Video Feedback.

Masterclasses include:

- Powerful Podcasts
- The Power of the Blog
- Mobile Learning – from mobile phones to the iPod Touch
- Building up a social media presence from scratch
- How to promote your events online ... on a budget
- Digital Storytelling – creating content through audio slideshows
- Using social media to tackle the learning agenda
- Getting Savvy with Social Networks
- Social Inclusion and Social Media
- How to Engage the Media

This is the opportunity for you and your colleagues to make connections, compare, contrast and bounce ideas off other organisations. You’ll leave the event with practical skills, fresh ideas and inspiration.

Booking a place is simple. All you have to do is go to www.socialmediaexchange.org.uk and click the booking form.

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Manga Competition in Scotland

Word – University of Aberdeen Writers Festival 2009 and manga publisher SelfMadeHero are delighted to announce the launch of an innovative comics competition. Entrants are invited to illustrate a scene from one of five Shakespeare plays using a shortened version of the original text.

All permanent residents of Scotland between the ages of twelve and eighteen, regardless of nationality, are eligible to enter the competition. Minors under the age of eighteen are eligible to enter the competition if written consent from their guardian/parent is provided on the entry form. Word Festival and SelfMadeHero employees, along with their relatives, are excluded from the competition.

The competition commences on Friday 20 March 2009 and ends on Friday 24 April 2009. The winner will be announced on Monday 4 May 2009.

<http://bit.ly/3Yghqj>

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Amazon Fail

I noticed something odd on Twitter over the Easter weekend. A number of Twitterers (Tweeters?) I follow, had added the hashtag #amazonfail to their tweets. On investigating I discovered that Amazon has been removing GLBT books from their sales rankings (Amazon Sales Ranks is a tool which shows how well a book sells compared to other books), including books for Young Adults concerning sexuality. If a person searches for one of these books by title or author, they will find it. However, that's only so useful. Many people find books on a given subject by browsing the subject listings, not knowing what is available by title or author, or by seeing what books are most popular per sales. These derankings remove titles from those listings, no matter a book's popularity or relevance in a given subject.

Amazon claims that this is the result of a 'glitch' and a 'ham-fisted' cataloguing error that they are working to rectify.

For more information use the search term 'amazonfail' on Google or the search engine of your choice.

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Picture This

Picture This is Waterstone's search, alongside Macmillan Children's Books, for an unpublished illustrator to work with Britain's biggest-selling picture book author, Julia Donaldson – writer of *The Gruffalo*, *The Princess and the Wizard* and *Tyrannosaurus Drip* – to supply their

vision for Julia's words. Entrants are invited to submit illustrations for the text, which will be judged by an expert panel. The prize is the opportunity to illustrate the book to be published for Christmas 2010. The aim is to find a new picture book talent, so the competition will be open to anyone who has not worked professionally anywhere in the world as a colour children's book or children's cover illustrator. This means that anyone else, for example a graphic designer, animator, greetings card illustrator etc would be completely eligible. Entry will be available to UK residents only.

The panel will consist of **Julia Donaldson**, **Lauren Child**, (bestselling children's author and illustrator), the editorial director for picture books at Macmillan Children's Books, a literary agent, Waterstone's picture books buyer and a children's book reviewer.

<http://bit.ly/m0wsN>

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Support Teen Literature Day

STLD was started in 2007 by the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA). The purpose of this celebration is to raise awareness among the general public that young adult literature is a vibrant, growing genre with much to offer today's teens.

Support Teen Literature Day also seeks to showcase some award-winning authors and books in the genre as well as highlight librarians' expertise in connecting teens with books and other reading materials.

Librarians all across the USA are encouraged to participate in Support Teen Literature Day on April 16th, 2009 by hosting events in their library or through their web site on that day.

Although this is an American celebration it can be imported into the UK as an example of good practice that can be used here with minimal adaptation.

For more information and ideas on events to run on this day: <http://bit.ly/1luBW>

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Submissions

If anyone would like to submit an article or idea for inclusion in the newsletter, please send it to teenlibraryservice@gmail.com

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Subscription to TLM

Subscribing to TLM is free, just send an e-mail to: editor@teenlibrarian.co.uk and ask to be added to the mailing list.

Q1. What made you decide to write for Teenagers?

I had decided to start writing for publication and was working on a technothriller. I realised that a sequel or prequel could feature a teenage boy as the hero...and then realised that it could be actually written for teens. Our eldest daughter was 13 at the time and had become a reluctant reader, I really wanted to get her reading again so thought I'd see if I could write something really exciting that she couldn't put down.

Q2. How do you get into the heads of your characters?

I only really get into the head of the main character - because the story is told from his point of view. In Joshua Files that means Josh - a teenage boy. He's young, not even fully able to understand his own feelings and motivations, let alone anyone else's. So where I want Josh to remain in the dark about what another character is really thinking and feeling...I keep myself in the dark too. I try not to identify with the older characters too much, or they might yabber on. We don't want that. I also listen to songs written by bands when they were young - Green Day and Arctic Monkeys. I find the lyrics very, very insightful...

Q3. Do you know instinctively what will appeal to Teens or is it more a hit or miss process?

I find it easy to remember my teenage self and how I thought and felt at the time. There are tricks you can do to trigger memory, listening to music that takes you back, etc. But the staples of adventure fiction - mystery and mayhem - have always appealed to me and still do. I haven't grown up much there...

Q4. What is the most satisfying part of the writing process for you?

I love something that happens to me when I'm about 40% of the way through the first draft. I suddenly understand the story and its themes in a way that I hadn't until then. I can see everything in context and also...in context to myself; things I have experienced or read. And then I'll see what's missing...the X-factor, if you like. The first time it was magical. I thought it was an unrepeatable miracle, but sure enough it happened again. Now I rely on it; I even have some idea how to trigger it. The result is often the part of the book that

people tell me was their favourite.

Q5. Do you ever read the works of other Teen/YA authors? If yes what can you recommend?

I do sometimes read other books by YA authors, mainly if they're sent to me by publishers or on my teen daughter's shelves. Lately I've loved "Falling" by Sharon Dogar, "Girl Meets Cake" by Susie Day and "Numbers" by Rachel Ward. Last year I really liked "The Book Thief" by Markus Zusak.

Q6. Are any of your novels based on personal experiences?

Not exactly, but most of the emotional experiences (like sudden bereavement) are things I'm very familiar with. The Joshua Files adventures are very physical - thank goodness I've never been in that kind of physical peril!

Q7. What are you working on at the moment?

I'm working on Joshua 4. can't tell you the title because it would be a plot spoiler for ICE SHOCK and Joshua 3...

Q8. Do you ever do Library visits to Teen Reading Groups? If yes, what is the best way to get into contact with you or your agent about it?

I have done library visits, so far only with Yr5/6. Would love to visit teens! Email me.

The MG Harris Blog - Official Author Website
<http://www.mgharris.net>

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Special thanks to M.G. Harris for taking the time to answer the eight questions.