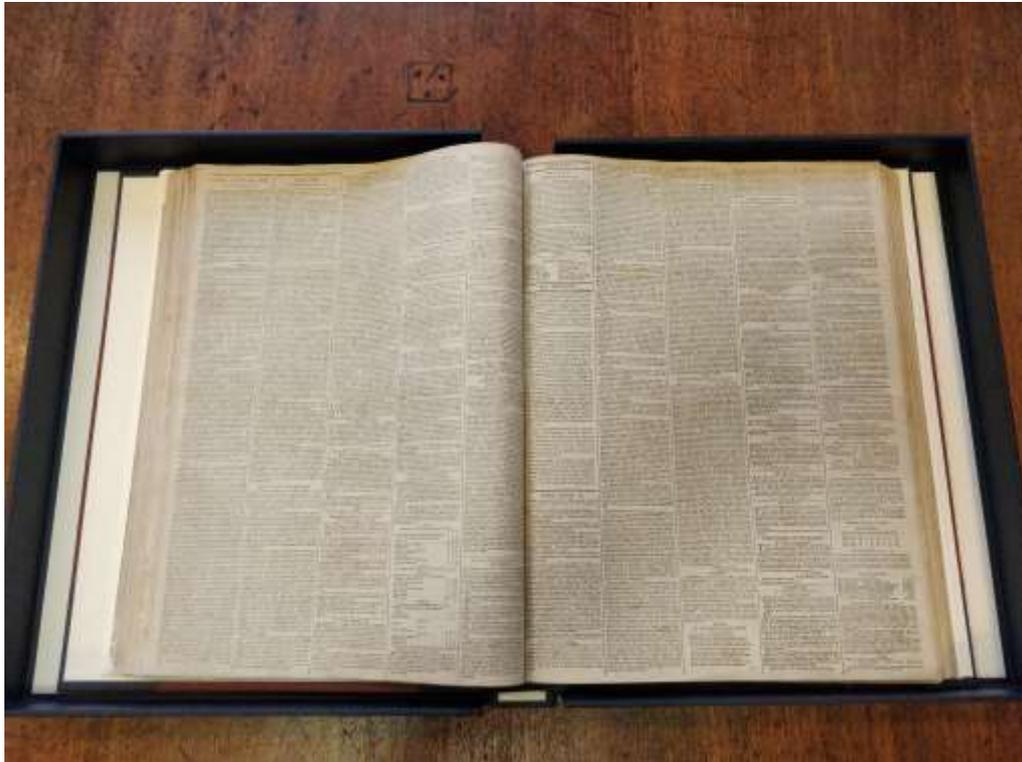




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The Leeds Library



Speaks Volumes 28

The Bi-Monthly Newsletter of The Leeds Library

February 2022



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In this issue of Speaks Volumes:

- [Update from our CEO](#)
- [Staff news](#)
- [Trustees News](#)
- [In the Library](#)
- [What's On](#)
- [Leeds Lit Fest](#)
- [Volunteering with us](#)



Cover image: Photograph of the newly rebound 1804-05 Leeds Mercury. Find out more on [page 12](#)

Opening Hours

Monday – Wednesday: 10am-6pm

Thursday: 10am-7pm

Friday: 10am-5pm

Saturday: 10am-4pm

Sunday: Closed



Tel: [0113 245 3071](tel:01132453071)

General Enquiries: enquiries@theleedslibrary.org.uk

Library Counter: counter@theleedslibrary.org.uk



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From Your CEO

Dear Member

We hope you are well and have been able to visit the Library since the turn of the year.

I would like to welcome you to our latest edition of Speaks Volumes, our member newsletter. Due to a number of reasons, the Library has not produced a newsletter for a significant period of time. We are very sorry about this and we hope and expect that from this point onwards we will return to the regular bi-monthly edition of the newsletter being circulated to everyone. We realise that in the months since the last edition was produced, several members have submitted articles for inclusion in the newsletter. The intention is for some of these pieces to be included in forthcoming editions of Speaks Volumes.



One of the reasons for the production of Speaks Volumes being delayed has been due to the focus that the Library has needed to have on the proposed purchase of 15 Commercial Street, which is our neighbouring building. The Trustees and staff have been humbled by the support and generosity of members to the project and currently work continues behind the scenes so that the completion of the purchase of the property can happen in the coming weeks. Library members will be informed as and when the completion of the property occurs, so please keep your eye out for further correspondence from the Library over the coming days.

The expansion of the Library is going to mean a very busy time for the staff team and trustees over the coming year, with many different pieces of work needing to be completed, including, for example, arranging for the collections of the Library that are currently being held in storage to be returned to Commercial Street for sorting, cataloguing and display. The increase in work will see several new team members join the Library and as detailed later in Speaks Volumes, we are also looking for volunteer support to help with many of the tasks that need to be undertaken over the coming months. We will make sure that members are kept up to date with staff changes as they happen and look forward to seeing volunteers back in the Library working on a daily basis.

Besides the work on 15 Commercial Street, the Library will be hosting a number of events for the Leeds Lit Fest which this year takes place from Sat 26th Feb to Sun 6th March. Details of the events can be found in this edition of Speaks Volumes, on the Library website and also on the Leeds Lit Fest website. We hope that members will take the chance to see one of the many talks we are hosting either online and in person and also visit events organised by some of the other festival partners.

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The Leeds Library

From Your CEO cont'd

The Library will also be running a number of new member evenings over the coming months. Prior to the Covid-19 crisis, the Library ran these events on a regular basis and so we are looking forward to starting them up again at a time and taking some of our newer members behind the scenes of the Library.

In the last couple of weeks we received the sad news that Alan Longbottom, a longstanding member of the Library passed away following a long period of illness. Alan was a Trustee of the Library for a number of years and an active member of the Buildings Committee. Alan is survived by his wife Betty, who were both awarded life membership of the Library by the Trustees in 2018 following their incredible generosity in supporting many aspects of the work of the Library. This support most recently included supporting the replacement of the flooring throughout the Library in 2020. A daily presence in the Library, Alan will be missed by all of the Library team.

Finally, over the coming weeks it is intended that we will give regular updates on all manner of work being undertaken at the Library. In the meantime, we hope that you enjoy reading through this edition of Speaks Volumes.

Best wishes,

Carl Hutton

Chief Executive



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Staff Changes

You may have noticed that there have been some changes in Library staff over the past six months. We bid a fond farewell to:



Liz Jones: After joining the Library team as Maternity cover back in 2013, Liz served as our Finance Officer for 8 years. In September 2021, Liz decided to leave the Library for new adventures and to spend more time with her family. Liz managed the Library finances with diligence and professionalism (and kept us all in line!)

We are grateful for her dedicated service to the Library over the years and we wish her well in her future endeavours. We look forward to seeing Liz in the Library relaxing with a book, when she is not out hiking the Dales.

Fiona Gell: Fiona joined the Library team in 2019, taking up the new role of Marketing and Communications Officer as well as working in partnership with the Library in running Leeds Lit Fest.

Fiona worked hard setting up events for the Library, updating the website, giving us new words for 'Word of the Day', and collating Speaks Volumes among many other things.

She set up the Leeds Library Book Club and will continue to run this in her capacity as Big Bookend partner for the present.

Fiona left the Library at Christmas to take up a new role at Sunny Bank Mills in Farsley. We thank her for her hard work during her time at the Library and wish her well. We look forward to continued partnerships with the Leeds Big Bookend.



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Staff changes, cont'd

Phil and Jean Robinson: Our caretakers, Phil and Jean, retired from the Library at Christmas to spend more time with their family (and to stay in bed past 5am for once!) For years they have worked industriously to keep the Library in tip top condition. Although we didn't see them as much during COVID, we always knew the cleaning fairies had been and we will certainly miss Jean's little notes!

We thank them for their tireless dedication to the Library and we hope they enjoy the added time with their family, as well as taking some time for themselves.



We also welcome four new members to the team:

Tom Walsh: Tom took over as Caretaker over the Christmas period. Tom previously worked as a full-time caretaker at a primary school for over 20 years, so he is well trained to look after us! He has been cracking on with the endless job of cleaning the books shelves (it's a bit like the Forth Road Bridge!) His wealth of knowledge and expertise will be an asset as we expand the Library premises in the coming year.



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Staff changes, cont'd



Claire O'Brien: Claire joined the Operations Team as Membership Administrator in August 2021. She has been an asset to the team, implementing monthly Direct Debit payments and setting up new information management systems, which will be a huge help in our communications with members.

Claire is also a talented artist; you may have already spotted some of her 'Cinemas of Leeds' artwork displayed around the Library.

Aimee-Jo Holdsworth: Aimee-Jo (no relation to Assistant Librarian, Helen!) joined the Library Services Team as Library Assistant in August 2021 and has fast become a valued member of the team. When she is not at the Library, she is studying for an MA in Librarianship at The University of Sheffield. Aimee joins us from the Brontë Parsonage Museum in Haworth where she worked as a Visitor Experience Assistant.



Ilan Harker: We look forward to Ian Harker joining the team as our new Marketing and Communications Officer in mid-February. Ian has worked with the Library over the years as a one of the founders and a lead partner in the Leeds Lit Fest. He is also the founder and editor of Strix magazine of poetry and short fiction.

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Trustee News

Sadly three trustees – Alex Hutchinson, Paul Maclean and Alan Wallace – have stood down in recent months for a variety of reasons. However we have been fortunate to identify two excellent new trustees who we have co-opted, or will shortly co-opt, onto the Board. Jan Dominey has, among other things, considerable experience as an assessor and adviser for Investors in People, and Flo Hoy is a designer/maker who is also the Director of the Craft Centre and Design Gallery underneath the City Art Gallery. Both bring skills we need as the Library moves into the next phase of its development, together with a real enthusiasm for, and commitment to, the Library.

Treasurer wanted!

Rob Kilner, our current treasurer, plans to stand down at the end of his current term of office in June 2022. We are, therefore, looking for a new treasurer to take over from him and are keen to identify someone in good time to enable a smooth handover. This is an important role on the Library board given our ambitious plans for development, particularly as we expand into 15 Commercial Street, and provides a real opportunity to help shape the future of the Library.

As well as the normal role of a trustee in setting the strategic direction for the Library, overseeing the development and delivery of annual plans and budgets, and ensuring that the Library uses its money appropriately, the treasurer will be responsible for overseeing all aspects of the Library's finances and financial strategy, working with the Library's Finance Officer and our accountants (Brown Butler). We are, therefore looking for someone with good financial experience and knowledge which they are willing to use to help the Library over the coming years.

In terms of time commitment, the Board of Trustees meets six times a year and there are a similar number of meetings of the Library's Resources Committee which oversees financial, staffing and governance issues. In addition there is a need to liaise with Library staff and our accountants, auditors and investment managers.

If you are interested and would like more information or want to discuss the role in more detail please get in touch with me via the Library e-mail: enquiries@theleedslibrary.org.uk or by calling the Library: 0113 245 3071.

Martin Staniforth

Chair of Trustees



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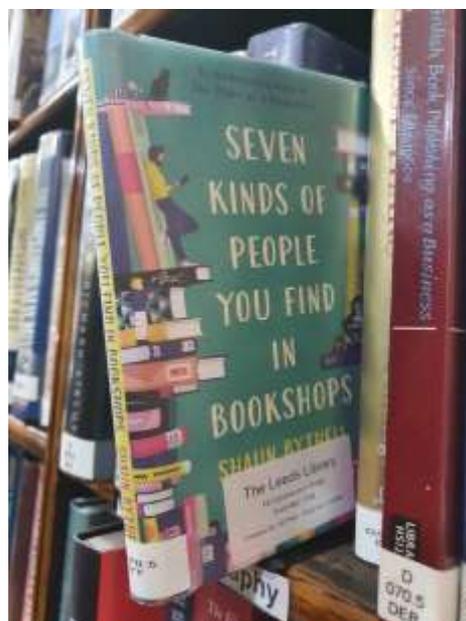
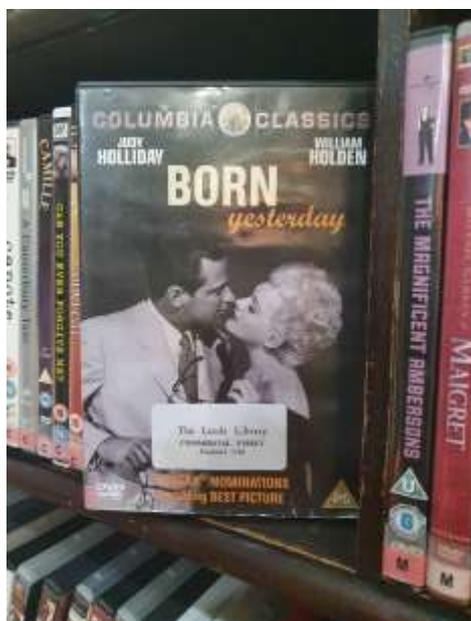
What shall I read next?

If you are stuck for something to read or watch, have a look at the staff recommendations trolley near the photocopier.



Recent recommendations include old and new fiction: *Moby Dick*, *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, *Wise Blood* and *Where the Crawdads Sing*. Non fiction titles Ysenda Maxtone Graham's *British Summer Time Begins : The School Summer Holidays 1930-1980* and Shaun Bythell's *Seven Kinds of People You Find in Bookshops* and DVDs *Born Yesterday* and *Zodiac*.

Please do ask the staff if you don't see anything you like on the trolley. We do our best to match you with your next great read!



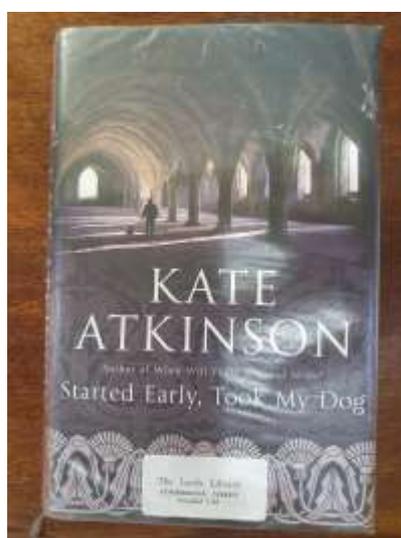
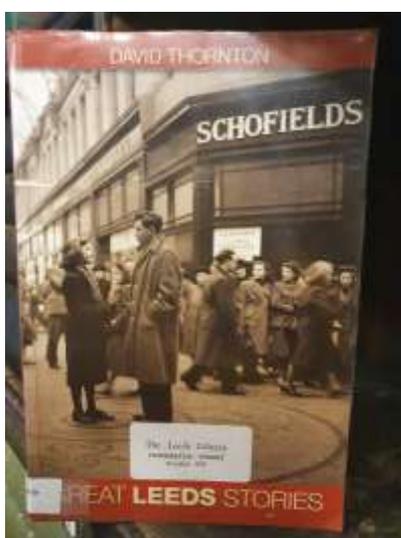
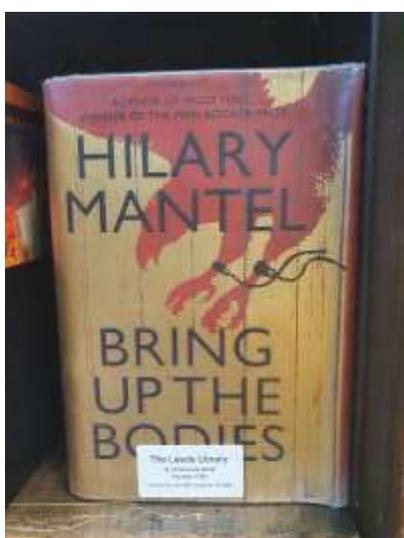


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Top Titles at The Leeds Library

The popularity of some books has passed into Leeds Library folklore. We had 4 copies of Booker Prize winning *Wolf Hall* at one time, as it seemed that everyone wanted to read it! When Hilary Mantel's sequel *Bring Up the Bodies* also won, some members reread it before borrowing the next in the series! The table below shows the 10 most borrowed items since the early 1990s. Its gratifying to see 3 Leeds authors in the list:



1	Wolf Hall	Mantel, Hilary	Fiction	83
2	Dissolution	Sansom, C.J.	Fiction	64
3	Bring Up the Bodies	Mantel, Hilary	Fiction	62
4	Started Early, Took My Dog	Atkinson, Kate	Fiction	61
5	Great Leeds Stories	Thornton, David	LD/942.819 THO	59
6	The Lighthouse	James, P.D.	Fiction	59
7	Dark Fire	Sansom, C.J.	Fiction	58
8	The Broken Token	Nickson, Chris	Fiction	56
9	The Various Haunts of Men	Hill, Susan	Fiction	55
10	Our Man in Havana	Reed, Carol	DVD	54



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John Wainwright Collection

Author John Wainwright was born in Hunslet in 1921.

After leaving school aged 15, he served as a rear gunner in Lancaster bombers, and after the war joined the police force. Studying in his spare time, he earned a law degree and began writing novels, becoming a full-time writer producing 78 crime novels as well as other works some under the pseudonym Jack Ripley.

He explained his prolific work rate by saying that once he left the police force he realised that he had to write – his economic security depended upon it, so he averaged 2000 words a day, 7 days a week producing anything between 3 and 6 books a year!

He was a private man, living quietly with his wife, but he said this about his writing in a rare interview: “My genre is not that of the mystery, of the who-made-it. I am not interested in the mysterious footprints left in the flower beds; the lords found dead on the library floor because someone threw a poisoned dart at him from the keyhole. I write *suspense*, I deal with why he-did-it. This is what fascinates me, just as it always fascinated me when I was a policeman”.

The Library already had a lot of his novels, but thanks to the generosity of our member Mr Hugh Kerrigan we now have over 70, including the Chief Inspector Lennox, Inspector Lyle, Superintendent Robert Blayde and Lewis series. They are on display below the in demand fiction in the Main Room, so why not give them a try?





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Conservation work

The image on the front cover of this issue of *Speaks Volumes* shows our newly rebound volume of Leeds Mercury newspapers from 1804-05. This work was carried out by Sycamore Bookbinding in Nottingham, who also do work for our fellow ILA member Library, Bromley House.

The volume was in a terrible condition, so Sycamore took the volume apart, dry cleaned and flattened the creased newspapers, then applied archival tissue and laminated the pages for strength. The individual papers were then all handsewn and rebound in navy blue heritage buckram and boxed.

The conservation of the volume cost £1,000, and in the next few years, we will be looking at ways to fund the restoration of other volumes of our newspapers.



Please do have a look at the newspapers when you come in!



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New Members Evenings are back!

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, our popular New Members Evenings were temporarily suspended but we are pleased to announce that we will be hosting three upcoming events for new members. If you have joined the Library as a new member since July 2019, we would like to invite you to an informal welcome event on one of the following dates:

Tuesday 15th February 6pm—7.30pm

Monday 14th March 6pm—7.30pm

Saturday 2nd April 11am—12.30pm

New Members Evenings are a way of thanking you for your support of the Library. They are also a good opportunity to meet with other members, staff and trustees. Enjoy an extended guided tour of the Library and ask any questions you may have. This is a free event and refreshments will be provided.

Places are limited so booking is essential. Please contact Membership Administrator, Claire O'Brien on 0113 2453071 or email enquiries@theleedslibrary.org.uk





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Tales from The Leeds Library returns!

The Leeds Library's podcast will be back with a new season on 9th March. This season we'll be delving back into the Library's collection and discussing the books and heritage that make the Library one of the most unique cultural institutions in Leeds. We'll continue to have fascinating conversations with our members – the local readers, writers, experts and enthusiasts who are part of the Library's long tradition of welcoming Leeds' most enquiring minds through its doors. We'll also keep looking outwards, bringing captivating people from all over the UK into the Library to discuss their work with books, libraries and literature.



We'd like to thank everyone who has supported us by listening so far. We've barely scratched the surface of the interesting conversations yet to be had, and the wealth of knowledge still to be uncovered. If you've not yet had the chance to dip into Tales from The Leeds Library all episodes are available through our website, as well as all major streaming platforms including Spotify, Amazon Music and Google Podcasts.



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The 4th Leeds Lit Fest returns to the Library.



The 4th Leeds Lit Fest will be taking place from Saturday 26th February to Sunday 6th March and celebrates the vibrant and thriving literature scene that exists in Leeds with local writers, performers and artists showcasing their talents alongside those from across the UK and internationally.

The award-winning festival, which is organised by a number of cultural organisations in the city, will look to engage audiences in over 50 events aimed to appeal not just to lovers of books and the written word but to also to audiences that would never normally consider going to a literature festival. This eclectic approach to the programme will see comedy, cabaret, a literature quiz, film screening, art exhibition, theatre performance, a literature walk and creative workshops sit alongside more traditional literary talks, book readings and poetry events.



The Library as the lead partner of the festival will be hosting a number of events, including high profile talks by **Tim Marshall** and **AC Grayling** (both on Sun 27th Feb, AC Grayling pictured left), **Peter Hain** (Thurs 3 March) and **Johann Hari** (Sat 5 March).

There will be a series of weekday lunchtime talks taking place each day from 12.30pm to 1.30pm seeing a range of writers talk about their work including **Jacqueline Sutherland** (Mon 28 Feb), **Catherine McCormack** (Tues 1 March, pictured right), **David Howe** (Wed 2 March), **Brian Groom** (Thurs 3rd March) and **David Gaffney** (Sat 5th March).



All of these lunch time talks will be accessible to all as they will be Pay What You Feel.



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The 4th Leeds Lit Fest returns to the Library—cont'd

Complementing the programme of talks will be a **Dickens Double Bill performed by Gerald Dickens** (pictured below) who has toured his critically acclaimed performances of his great-great-grandfather across the world for a number of years and is someone who the Library has been wanting to see perform in the New Room



for several years. Poetry will also feature at the Library for the festival with **Nowt But Verse**, featuring **Hannah Stone** and other local poets taking place on Friday 4th March from 12.30pm.

On the last day of the festival (Sun 6th March), the Library will host a storytelling workshop with **Matthew**

Bellwood (pictured below, right) and talks by travel writers **Rebecca Lowe** and **Peter Fiennes** (pictured below left) who, as with many of the other writers appearing in the Library, will pick up on the theme of boundaries.





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The 4th Leeds Lit Fest returns to the Library—cont'd

From a broader perspective, most of the events programming in the Library at the moment, regarding non-fiction writing focuses on the topic or subject being written about, not about the writer or author themselves. It is an attempt for the Library to return to its roots as an institution that welcomes debate on the issues of the day with different opinions being considered on matters. So in terms of this year's events hosted by the Library, subject matters relating to the environment, sustainability, geography, power, apartheid, philosophy and feminism, and mental health are all covered by one or more of the writers mentioned. This commitment to cover a range of subjects in the events held at the Library is intended to reaffirm our commitment to be a place in which people can openly discuss and debate the current issues of the day, a principle that the Library was proud of when we were first founded in 1768.

Full details of all of the events for the Lit Fest can be seen at www.leedslitfest.co.uk, including events programmed by the Carriageworks Theatre, Leeds Libraries, Leeds Big Bookend, MILIM CIC, Hyde Park Book Club, Leeds Church Institute, Headingley Lit Fest and Strix Magazine who are the other partner organisations who make the festival happen. Of particular interest to members will be a Full Brontë Cabaret (pictured below) taking place at the Carriageworks Theatre on Sat 5th March, presented by the Scary Little Girls Theatre Company who worked with the Library on a Leeds Lit Walk for the festival in 2020.

We look forward to seeing you at some of the events for the festival in the coming days.





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Volunteering Opportunities at the Library

The Library would like to hear from anyone who is keen to assist us in volunteering some of their time to help the Library to undertake a number of key tasks and duties. Back in March 2020, at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic the Library took the difficult decision to pause the work of our valued volunteers due to the requirements of social distancing measures, the management of volunteers and the need for staff to work in bubbles, making the management of volunteers impossible. Two years on, with Covid-19 measures now easing and the Library preparing to extend into 15 Commercial Street, we are now looking to invite members and non-members to sign up to volunteer and assist the Library with several programmes of work over the coming months.

If you are interested in helping the Library by volunteering your time, please can you either email us at enquiries@theleedslibrary.org.uk, call the Library on 0113 2453071 or talk to a member of the Library team on your next visit. Any person enquiring about volunteering opportunities will be required to complete a Volunteering Request Form that will ask about skills and interest areas as well as availability of the person to volunteer. On receipt of the form, an informal chat with one of the members of staff will be arranged to look at what volunteering opportunities meet the skills and experience of the person wishing to volunteer. Each volunteer role, whether it is cataloguing, book cleaning, assisting with Library tours, helping out at events, assisting with the administration of the archive or one of the library collections, will have a role description and a named member of staff who will provide them with support and mentoring whilst undertaking volunteering duties.



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Volunteering Opportunities at the Library—cont'd

As with other heritage charities such as English Heritage and the National Trust, all volunteering roles will be reviewed regularly with the length of each volunteering job agreed for set periods of time ranging from 4 weeks to 6 months in length. At the end of each set period there will be a review of the work undertaken by the volunteer with the opportunity to further extend the period of time in which they are working on a project, potentially look at another volunteering job that can be undertaken in the Library, or take a break from volunteering.



In recognising that some of the volunteering tasks previously undertaken at the Library could have been structured more effectively it is hoped that this approach provides clarity on the expectations of volunteers when helping the library team and also a better understanding of how the Library will support more effectively each volunteer so that the work is more enjoyable and the positive impact of the volunteers time definable. We will set up a volunteer waiting list when the demand for volunteering exceeds the number of volunteers that the team can realistically support, or if certain volunteer projects are oversubscribed.

Over the coming months it is hoped and anticipated that, alongside many members who previously volunteered for the Library, there will be a number of new volunteers who are keen to assist in ensuring that the Library can not just manage the transition period that will see the Library expand into 15 Commercial Street but also assist in the vision for the Library to be a cultural hub in the city that is accessible to all.