September 2003

Rumo(u)rs from Paddington

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Recommended Citation
Rayner, Daryl (2003) "Rumo(u)rs from Paddington," Against the Grain: Vol. 15: Iss. 4, Article 6.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.4473

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I spent all of last winter waiting, in anticipation, for warmer days and now that 30 degrees C has arrived I’m thinking—maybe autumn won’t be so bad after all. You have to consider that the word “air-conditioning” does not exist in the English vocabulary. I’ve also been bit by hay-fever for the first time in my life, which I still can’t quite believe. How do these allergies suddenly arrive?

Enough of the weather and my health. In spite of the heat, there has been lots happening over here.

I notice from the BBC Website that a manor house that once belonged to Jane Austen’s brother is opening to the public later this month as a library and study centre for women’s writing.

The National Library of Norway has selected FAST Data Search to power its many digital information archives, including: The Digital Radio Archive (DRA), Culture Net Norway (Kulturren Norge), The Digital Newspaper Library, Cultural Heritage EkoFisk, The Nordic Web Archive (NWA), Paradigma, and The National Library’s own public Website. For those of you that speak Norwegian http://www.nb.no/.

Vitek Traczyk <vitek@ursei.co.uk> and his colleagues at BioMedCentral Ltd. have now published over 2,500 articles of peer-reviewed biomedical research, all of which are covered by their open access agreement.

I am also pleased to announce that our friends at Palgrave Macmillan have announced that Statesman Yearbook Online (SYBWorld) is now available for trial at www.sybworld.com.

The 3rd Scottish eBooks Seminar will be taking place in Edinburgh on September 24th. Organised by SLAINTE http://www.slainte.org.uk. Colin Galway of Glasgow University will be chairing the event and there will be speakers from the National Institute for the Blind, North Lanarkshire Council and the NHS e-library.

I can’t write this column without mentioning Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix. I am told that British library supplier Askews made special arrangements to ensure that Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix reached library shelves on the same day as it hit the bookshops. Scheduled events in the UK included Potter workshops at Newcastle City Libraries, a midnight vigil at Cheltenham Library and breakfast events by Gloucestershire libraries. If you don’t know your howlers from your owls, go to the Harry Potter site at http://www.bloomsbury.com/harrypotter and find out more.

The University of Edinburgh and the Sunday Herald newspaper have launched a plea for books to send to the looted library of Baghdad University, reputedly the oldest university in the world. The campaign has successfully secured a copy of every book in the catalogues of Edinburgh University Press and Canongate Books. Further donations have come from Blackwells and Elsevier. To help, contact Ian Revie +44 131 650 8415 <ian.revie@ed.ac.uk>.

I am told that the information services centre for Kings College London, the Maughan Library has won the 2003 City Heritage Award for the most outstanding conservation project in the City of London. The Maughan Library is thought to be the largest new university library facility in Britain since the Second World War http://www.kcl.ac.uk/dewpsi/sites/chancery/topchancery.html.

Congratulations to Tim Owen and Barbara Buckley who became Mr. and Mrs. Buckley Owen recently. Tim is Head of External Relations at CILIP and Barbara secretary to the Statistics Commission. The North West Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (NWMLAC) has appointed Clare Connor as Chief Executive. We wish you luck, Clare! I am also pleased to announce that Christine Mille previously Liaison Librarian at the University of Reading has been appointed librarian at Christie’s Education.

It was good to see Helen Henderson (helen@helenhenderson.com) earlier this month as she came to visit us in Paddington Station. She was as effervescent as ever as she told me about all her new projects including BookLink a project which involves publishers sending books to libraries in Ethiopia. If any publishers want to know more about this good cause they should contact Helen on the address above.

xrefer are hosting their own event this week in the Hilton in Paddington Station called "Libraries on the Web: collections or services?" Ben Schott, the author of Miscellaneous is speaking along with Elizabeth Malone head of e-concept and strategy at the British Library and Michael Lightowler of Westminster Libraries. If you can’t make it in person full details of presentations will be posted under news and events at http://www.xrefer.com/

That’s all for now. Until next time...