

NEWS LETTER

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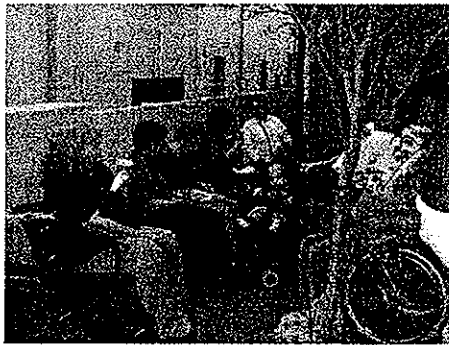
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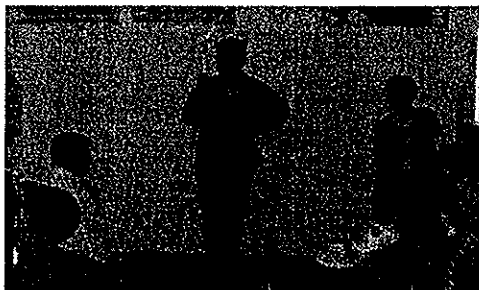
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Volunteers thanked

A barbecue was held in April to acknowledge the efforts of our volunteers, without whom the library would not exist. Although the number who attended was small, we had a great time. Each volunteer was presented with a certificate to formalise the Library's gratitude for their efforts.



After we had eaten, a short meeting was held to formulate some ideas for the library's direction in the short term. As a result of that meeting a draft strategic plan has been drawn up.



There will more about that in the next newsletter. In the meantime, we are

progressing with computerisation of the library's holdings and any help you can give would be appreciated (see story inside).

Book donations

The Library is always grateful to receive books! We are especially short of contemporary fiction, especially lesbian fiction, including detective and mystery books. So check your shelves for books that you don't need. You can always borrow them back from the library if you want to re-read them!

Have you thought about buying a book and donating it to the library? If you have a recent receipt your donation may be tax deductible.

Convener's report

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July 2001

2000 was a year of more upheaval and change for TWL. In 2001 we continue with the spirit and determination

which has ensured the Library's survival.

The management committee and volunteers are completely responsible for the running of the library and I would like to thank each one of them for their tireless efforts without which we wouldn't be here today. To all our members and sponsors also many thanks for your continued support.

From our sponsors we are asking your ongoing financial assistance as WoLFs (Women's Library Friends). Donations to this scheme help with the general running of TWL and are tax deductible.

This year our aims remain consolidation, promotion and automation: consolidation to ensure the smooth running of the library and the establishment of a firmer financial position, promotion to increase membership, sponsorship and volunteer numbers. This increase is vital to our continued survival because of the revenue, energy and momentum it creates. Automation will mean the more efficient use of the library and the faster accessioning of donated books so the collection can be updated faster.

Our vision for the library is still to offer our members a dynamic space to be, gather and find inspiration, and to house and grow a collection which encourages and supports women. For this we need your continued support: emotional, physical and financial.

Danielle

Danielle Cairns

Catalogue automation

A meeting was held earlier in the year to plan the computerisation of the Library's collection of books and videos. The benefits of putting our collection onto a computer database are significant and include:

- a more efficient and accurate way of borrowing, returning and accessioning books
- a more accurate way of keeping as accessing all records on our stock
- bringing TWL in line with expectations that members have of libraries in 2001.

We optimistically set ourselves the goal of achieving full automation by 1 December 2001 which means, in practical terms, data entry of approx. 20,000 books ÷ 20 weeks = 1000 books per week ÷ 10 volunteers = 25 books per volunteer per week for the rest of the year.

We need your help! Can you spend one hour per week doing the much needed data entry? If you can, please call Gail Wilson during the day on 9691 3378 and leave a message to arrange a short training session. It really is very easy!

More BBQ photos

The chefs were preparing...



...the guests may have been plotting...

...the guests may



...but a woman's work is never done.

From the shelves

Book review

A suitable job for a woman: Inside the world of women private eyes by Val McDermid

Val McDermid has written 15 crime novels, five featuring lesbian detective journalist Lindsay Gordon and six featuring feminist private eye Kate Brannigan. More recently she has turned her attention to crimes which are solved by police profiling, and several of these novels are, chillingly, written from the point of view of the killer.

In *A suitable job for a woman*, written in 1995, she turns her attention from her fictional hero to real-life women private detectives in both the UK and the US. She spent many months travelling in both countries, interviewing the women and researching their lives and work, and this book is the result.

McDermid was able to call on her former life for skills she needed when she was writing this book. As she says in her prologue:

...I gave up journalism to become a full-time writer of crime fiction. But I couldn't resist picking up my old trade in a bid to discover if the real Kinsey Milhone or Kate Brannigan exists. This is the story of that quest.

One of the strengths of the book is that McDermid allows the women to speak in their own voices. The chapters are separated by short passages taken verbatim from stories the women told her, with their humour and natural expressions intact – you can almost hear their voices lifting off the page. From San Francisco and LA to Miami and New York and across the Atlantic in many UK cities, McDermid pursued her quarry and let them talk about themselves.

The women talk about all kinds of issues. Unlike their fictional counterparts, most of them have family lives that have to fitted around the long tedious hours of surveillance, reading and understanding long legal papers, and the often

dangerous task of document service – the job that provides most of them with their bread and butter. Surprisingly to me, only one-sixth of her 34 subjects came from the police force: half came into the job by accident, about one-third of the remainder from office jobs related to the law, security or insurance, and the rest through family connections.

Many of the women she interviewed agreed that they go out of their way to help women who are the victims of violence or stalking, although they admitted to frustration at the number of times they sometimes end up working for the same women. Several expressed the desire to prevent women becoming victims, while acknowledging that this is often a difficult task.

There is a common thread through the book: almost all the women interviewed believed that women are specially well-suited to private eye work, partly because they are less conspicuous than a man might be when they are tailing or watching someone. Of course – who ever notices a middle-aged woman? Many of them also feel that women don't take men at face value as much as other men do – their bullshit detectors are better honed.

If you are a fan of feminist crime fiction, this is an interesting book for background to the real problems faced by women private eyes on the job. McDermid's experience at interviewing and reporting, along with her skills as a story-teller, have captured the lives of her subjects in a book that is both fascinating and satisfying.

Mary-Helen Ward

Desperately seeking reviews...

Have you enjoyed a book from the library shelves recently? Write a review telling us why so we can fill up the book review page in every issue.

MOVIE AFTERNOON

We will be showing two exciting
films on DVD at the library at on
Sunday 29 July:

Fire at 3pm

A different an interesting Indian film
about an arranged marriage

Contact at 5pm

Starring Jodie Forster, this is science
fiction with a deeper message

Gold coin entry, BYO cushion and drink
Light refreshments will be provided

Book news

New books!

TWL's financial crisis has eased enough for the management committee to be able to buy some new brand books for the shelves. The first priority is lesbian fiction, which members have long been requesting. These will start appearing very soon, and will be in a special display for their first few weeks. So keep an eye out for them.

Accessionfest

On Saturday 21st June, members of the management committee and volunteers are invited to spend some time accessioning the piles of books which are building up behind the counter and moving them to the shelves. This will take place between 11am and 3pm, so if you can help please come along. You'll be most welcome.

Introduce-a-member

If each member introduced one friend to the library, our numbers could double. So, how about giving one of your friends the membership form enclosed and bringing her into the library with it. Once she's seen what we've got to offer, she'll join for sure!

TWL would like to thank 7-Eleven, corner of King and Brown Sts, for supplying daily newspapers.

Last date for copy to be left at the library or emailed to mhw@mira.net for the next issue:

30 September



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PO BOX 271
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