

Minutes of the meeting of the Newsplan Working Party held at the National Library of Wales at 11.00am on Thursday 8 June 2000

Present: Brynmor Jones (Chairman), Anita Thomas, Susan Mends, Kay Warren-Morgan, Janet Karn, Joy Thomas, Beti Jones, Non Jenkins, Rhidian Griffiths, Iwan Jones (Secretary)

1. Apologies for absence and personal matters

Apologies were received from Christopher Edwards, Annette Jones, Marilyn Jones, Susan Pugh, Ann Rhydderch, John Rees Thomas. The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Susan Mends, representing the WLA Local Studies Group.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 1999 and matters arising

2.1. The minutes had been circulated and were accepted as a correct record.

2.2. Preserving Welsh newspapers (2.2)

Rhidian Griffiths explained that from now on the British Library did not expect to retain paper copies of Welsh local newspapers once it had acquired microfilm copies. It was therefore even more important to collect and preserve paper copies in Wales. Although local libraries were not always able to fund the preservation of newspapers, both libraries and archives had an interest in their preservation, and there was benefit in cooperation. The National Library tried to collect comprehensively and encouraged other libraries to collect in addition, in order to ensure full coverage. The National Library was anxious to know of any disposals of newspaper collections.

2.2 Priorities for filming (2.3)

Beti Jones had received responses indicating newspapers for which there was heavy demand and had included those titles as Priority 1 in a revised list of Welsh newspapers, which she circulated. She agreed to send copies of the list to all the Welsh library authorities and asked that any further responses should be sent to her, Beti Jones, Department of Printed Books, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 3BU as soon as possible.

Of the titles listed in the original bid, funding was available to film about 40%, or about 5000 reels, and there was a need to identify all the titles to be filmed to make up this total. Of the priority Welsh newspapers that were held only by the British Library, there was uncertainty whether they would be filmed as part of Newsplan, and if so, by whom.

2.3 Newsplan Report on the web (2.4)

Rhidian Griffiths said that he hoped the Newsplan (Wales) Report would soon be available on the web, hosted by the National Library site. The software used was ISYS:web which would not allow on-line searching.

2.4 Newsplan Conference and Newsplan (Wales) Seminar (2.6)

The next Newsplan Conference would be held at the Euston Plaza Hotel, London, on 19-20 March 2001. It was agreed that a Newsplan(Wales) seminar might be arranged after that date when filming had started and progress was clearer.

2.5 LISC(W) Preservation Survey (5)

There had been an excellent response to the preservation survey of library and archive collections in Wales commissioned by LISC(W), with a return rate of about 66%. The report of the consultant, Jane Henderson, had been accepted by LISC(W) and would be published on the Assembly's web site. The report made recommendations intended to benefit the preservation of library and archive collections in Wales, and there was a need to press for early action so that the recommendations were implemented.

3. Report on the LINC Newsplan Panel Meeting of 27 April 2000

Iwan Jones reported that Elizabeth Melrose of Yorkshire and Humberside Library Services had taken the chair of the Panel in place of Ann Matheson, who was retiring in July. Dr Jane Secker had given a short paper on the theme of *The People's Heritage: Newspapers and Historical Research*, based on her PhD research on newspapers in Wales. Copies of the paper were distributed to the members of the Working Party with the permission of Dr Secker. Its recommendations included useful guidelines for newspaper collections and it was agreed to distribute the paper to other members of the Working Party with copies of the IFLA guidelines on newspapers.

4. Report on 'Newsplan 2000' and funding for Newsplan

Rhidian Griffiths outlined progress. Newsplan 2000 had been set up as a limited company to direct the Newsplan programme and an application for charitable status would be made. The first trustees of the company were John Byford, Ann Matheson and Rhidian Griffiths. Accommodation for Newsplan 2000 would be provided by the British Library. John Lauder, until recently Head of the Scottish Newspaper Microfilming Unit, had been appointed Newsplan Director, starting in June 2000. The Director, who would coordinate the work of the Newsplan regions, would be invited to visit Wales. A Project Manager would be appointed to take charge of day-to-day work.

The Newsplan Director would develop specifications for microfilming so that the work could be put to tender within the European Community. The microfilming units at the British Library and the National Libraries of Wales and Scotland hoped to tender for the work as a consortium. Filming was unlikely to start before 2001. The Director would also need to confirm partnership funding from the newspaper industry and participating libraries. Peter Chapman, who was involved with Information North, had begun looking for support for Newsplan from the Newsquest organisation. Rhidian Griffiths invited suggestions for local funding. Charitable Trusts such as Llandinam were suggested, and Joy Thomas said that a local history society had agreed to fund the filming of the Rhos Herald.

5. Newsplan work plan

A revised and prioritised Newsplan workplan (targeting developments that were not included in phase one of the HLF programme) had been prepared by Ed King. Copies were circulated and the priorities considered.

5.1 Indexes

Details of the Cambrian Indexing Project had been circulated with the minutes of the last meeting. It was agreed that the *List of Indexes to Welsh Periodicals and Newspapers*, prepared by William Howells and recently made available on the WLA web site (www.llgc.org.uk/wla/), was extremely useful in identifying newspaper indexes in Wales. Anita Thomas and Kay Warren-Morgan said that many local studies indexes included newspapers and newspaper cuttings, but that they varied widely in terms of quality, standards and the criteria of what to index.

5.2 Surveys

It was agreed that surveys provided evidence of the value of newspaper collections for education, local studies and other uses and could be used to justify staff and expenditure. Details of the LASER survey form and its findings had been circulated. Anita Thomas said that in order to avoid 'survey overload' the opportunity could be taken to carry out surveys as part of the 'best value' reviews that were being undertaken in stages by local authorities. It was felt that there was a need to follow a standard survey form and that LASER survey form provided a useful model. Iwan Jones agreed to ask Ed King whether the form could be used without any restriction.

5.3 E-mail and Internet

It was agreed that there was a need to set up both a web site and an e-mail circulation list or discussion group by the time that filming started. The National Library would seek to develop a Newsplan (Wales) web site, which would contain the Newsplan (Wales) Report. In the short term it was agreed that

information about Newsplan should be passed to Huw Llewelyn Evans for inclusion in the WLA mailing list.

5.4 Education and Local Studies

Promoting the use of newspapers needed the active support of local studies librarians, and it was agreed to look for ways to co-operate with the WLA Local Studies Group, particularly in developing the use of newspapers in education.

6. Progress in Wales

Pembrokeshire, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Blaenau Gwent, Wrexham, Cardiff and the National Library reported on current progress. No retrospective filming was reported. Rhondda Cynon Taff, Wrexham, Cardiff and the National Library were continuing with the filming of current newspapers. There was some duplication in filming popular titles and it was agreed that continuing cooperation would be needed in filming current newspapers, since these were not included in the HLF-funded programme. The Department of Printed Books of the National Library agreed to circulate a list of current newspapers being filmed, and recent newspapers for which film existed. Ideally, the National Library wished to film all current titles and all significantly variant editions. Producing copies from existing negatives was much cheaper than original filming.

7. Any other business

7.1 It was agreed to invite Ed King, British Library Newspaper Librarian, to the next meeting, and to write to John Lauder to congratulate him on his appointment.

7.2 Members of the Working Party were invited to meet Mr Leith Haarhoff, head of the National Library's Reprographic Unit, to see the microfilming unit and the new digital imaging facilities, after the meeting.

8. Date and place of next meeting

11.00am on Thursday 9 November 2000 at the National Library of Wales.