**CILIPS CONFERENCE 2022 (OR WHY I LOVE MY JOB) by Fiona Elder**

My daily commute to and from work is through fields and woodland – an ideal oasis of calm at the start and end of each day. On the journey to work, time to think through the day ahead. On the journey home, an opportunity to process the strains and stresses of the day.

I’ve been to a number of CILIPS events and conferences in the four years before lockdown, and I remember them as a quiet time to reset, to rethink, to renew. I left feeling that I had concentrated on the purpose of my work, and I felt refreshed in my vocation.

This year – well! I think that Scotland’s librarians had saved up all their unused socialising energy from the past two years and were ready for a big CILIPS party. There was so much packed in to each day, every breakout session looked fascinating, the exhibitors were all keen to chat, and the well-chosen icebreaker ensured that most of us spent our time accosting complete strangers to find our “match”. (You were given a Scotland’s Suffragette Trumps card and had to find someone else with the same card – a genius way of making sure librarians communicate!)

On the Tuesday, the first Keynote speech was given by Catherine Salmond, who outlined the reasons behind Scotland on Sunday’s campaign for libraries. An excellent take-away from her talk was that we all need to read up on the proven benefits of libraries to their communities, and arm ourselves with this information.

The second Keynote talk was an online chat between Amina Shah and Gemma Cairney, which was a lesson to the audience that ONLINE TALKS CAN BE MADE TO WORK. (I can’t be alone in being terrified that an audience assembles in my library to watch the internet Circle of Doom as a connection fails…)

In the breakout sessions, I chose to hear about The Power of CILIP Professional Registration, a talk delivered by Agnès Guyon, and the PKSB seems a little less scary now. (Thank you, Agnès.)

The newly-formed Public and Mobile Libraries Group held a session where Caroline Messer and Kathleen Milne talked us through not just the projects they are running, but the reasons for the projects and what they are aiming to achieve. This was a useful reminder that it’s not just about the number of activities we run, it’s also about having a whole-library strategy and A Plan.

People-Centred Design with Val and Scott from Nomad was an hilarious way for me to bring my breakout sessions to a close. The thinking about design and purpose for our buildings was serious and enjoyable, but the constructions we had to build from cards would … maybe not stand up to architectural scrutiny?

My conference day was not quite the oasis of calm I had expected but it certainly provided an injection of much-needed energy to my thinking – thank you, CILIPS Scotland, and thank you CILIPS Tayside.

**A Tuesday at CILIPS 2022 by Louise McDermott**

It’s been 7 years since I last attended a CILIPS conference and I fondly remember it as a day of connecting with my fellow library people, gaining further knowledge of our profession and being made aware of things on a national scale. When I was offered the chance to go again, especially after recent years, I jumped at the chance.

Arriving first thing, I was warmly greeted by the CILIPS team and collected my lanyard and also a fun little ice breaker – find your match with Suffragette Trumps Cards. Since there was a little while to go until the AGM I wandered around the exhibitors and was lucky enough to find my match almost immediately with Aidan from Bibliotheca, who was good enough to take a quick selfie with me.

Shortly after that the AGM began before leading into the first Keynote speech of the day: *Stop the press – but never our libraries: the importance of media campaigning* by Catherine Salmond. Catherine gave a brilliant and impassioned speech about being aware of all the benefits libraries have to offer their local communities – all the extra things we offer and how we should be better at advertising them.

The second Keynote speech was an online conversation with Gemma Cairney and Amina Shah. Despite it taking place over Zoom, the conversation flowed easily and Gemma was enthusiastic and extremely personable. The wonders of technology!

After a lovely lunch (I highly recommend the Lemon Meringue!) It was time for the Parallel sessions and it was certainly hard to choose between the interesting arrays of options available. In the end I went for *The Power of Professional Registration* with Agnès Guyon as I am just about to start my Certification and thought that it would be a brilliant introduction. I was not wrong. Agnès was clear and concise, making the whole task seem much less daunting and I left the talk feeling positive and motivated to progress.

A quick break later and it was onto Parallel session 2: *PMLG Scotland – Public Libraries in Communities* with Caroline Messer and Kathleen Milne. The newly created group provided a riveting talk about all their ongoing projects and how we really need to adapt our services to best fit our individual communities.

After a quick chat with the exhibitors (and some lovely freebies!) it was on to the last Parallel session of the day: *Walking groups in Scottish public libraries: benefits, challenges and opportunities* with Perla Innocenti and Inga Allan. I was especially interested in this as there are some local walking groups to my branches and I have a friend who works in Fife who has successfully run one before. The recording was interesting and full of useful information, signposting to helpful websites and resources.

Lastly it was time to bid CILIPS farewell for another year with the President’s closing remarks. Overall it was a fun and fact filled day, allowing me to meet people that I’ve corresponded with in person and see friends form other authorities. I certainly hope to be able to attend again.

Thank you CILIPS and thanks to CILIPS Tayside for giving me the opportunity to be there.