



The Network Newsletter – Ebulletin 399, 10 June 2024

Events

Events have been added to the Courses & Events pages on The Network website – see: <https://seapn.org.uk/events/>.

Black Lives Matter/Anti-racism

“Anti-racist Museums Programme”

<https://www.museumsassociation.org/campaigns/anti-racism/anti-racist-museums-programme/#>

(Source: Museums Association email updates, 4 Jun 2024)

“We are launching a pilot programme to work with a cohort of museums that are actively working towards becoming anti-racist organisations.

Museums are in a unique position to confront systemic racism because of our engagement with diverse audiences and communities, and due to the tangible and ideological links between collections and Britain’s imperial past. Anti-racism and decolonisation must be central to making museums sustainable and accessible for the future.

We’re delighted to confirm that the Anti-racist Museums Programme cohort comprises:

- Bristol Museum and Art Gallery
- Birmingham Museums Trust
- Fulham Palace
- Migration Museum
- Amgueddfa Cymru – Museum Wales
- Museums and Galleries Edinburgh”

Health & Wellbeing issues – Other Agencies

“Reading Well for dementia”

https://readingagency.org.uk/get-reading/our-programmes-and-campaigns/reading-well/reading-well-for-dementia/?mc_cid=56ec32e827&mc_eid=3fa1d39831

(Source: The Reading Agency *Reading Round-Up*, 31 May 2024)

Just in case you’ve missed that The Reading Agency have just launched their new “Reading Well” list.

“I’m A Dementia Expert – This 1 Hobby May Be The Best For Building Alzheimer’s Defences”

https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/dementia-fighting-hobby_uk_665ee724e4b022af97dd8ca3

(Source: *Later Life AGenda*, 5 Jun 2024)

This is actually an interesting article – once you get past the intro!

It argues that certain hobbies/activities build up what they call a “cognitive reserve” which may stand you in better stead in defending against Alzheimer’s.

One method is to: “Pick something that really interests you, grips you in a visceral sort of way, and then obsess (in a good way) about it.” However, the article then goes on to say:

“But that aside, ‘Reading for pleasure is perhaps the single most effective activity you can engage in for increasing cognitive reserve,’ [...]”

England’s widening health gap: local places falling behind

Full report: <https://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/resources-reports/englands-widening-health-gap-local-places-falling-behind/read-the-report.pdf>

Web summary: <https://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/resources-reports/englands-widening-health-gap-local-places-falling-behind>

(Source: *Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance Bulletin*, Jun 2024)

New report from the Institute of Health Equity, which:

“[...] confirms widening inequalities in life expectancy between regions in England and within local authorities since 2010. These widening inequalities are associated with an average reduction in local authority spending power of 34 percent.” [Taken from web summary]

Migration issues – Libraries, Museums, Archives and Cultural and Heritage Organisations: Libraries of Sanctuary

“Libraries’ warm welcome saluted with national honour”

<https://www.herald.wales/west-wales/swansea/Community/libraries-warm-welcome-saluted-with-national-honour/>

(Source: *Public Libraries News*, 27 May 2024)

Great news from Swansea:

“The network of libraries, run by Swansea Council, has become the first in Wales to be awarded Library of Sanctuary status [...]

To secure Library of Sanctuary status, Swansea underwent an accreditation process.

Swansea Council has 17 libraries across local communities and offers a delivery service for customers who are unable to access their local library. Librarians offer a number of digital services to members.

Council staff run the Swansea Prison library as part of their network – and it’s the first time a prison library has been included in a Library of Sanctuary award.”

Migration issues – Other Agencies

“How 17th century refugees used the printing press to fight their oppressors – and laid the foundations of modern humanitarianism”

https://theconversation.com/how-17th-century-refugees-used-the-printing-press-to-fight-their-oppressors-and-laid-the-foundations-of-modern-humanitarianism-229043?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20May%2023%202024%20-%202977930285&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20May%2023%202024%20-%202977930285+CID_a978f66cb690887aed10cea73c3c9e6d&utm_source=campaign_monitor_europe&utm_term=How%2017th%20century%20refugees%20used%20the%20printing%20press%20to%20fight%20their%20oppressors%20and%20laid%20the%20foundations%20of%20modern%20humanitarianism

(Source: *The Conversation*, 23 May 2024)

Interesting reminder that first-hand accounts of violence and oppression have a long history:

“Already in the 17th century, oppressed minorities in Europe found the printing press to be a powerful ally in putting the spotlight on their agony.”

LGBTQ+ issues – Libraries, Museums, Archives and Cultural and Heritage Organisations

“Pride Month 2024!”

<https://www.culturehealthandwellbeing.org.uk/news/blog/pride-month-2024>

(Source: *Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance Bulletin*, Jun 2024)

New blogpost from the Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance, celebrating “[...] a small selection of LGBTQ+ creative health programmes and projects around the country.”

Broader issues – Other Agencies

Children and young people’s writing in 2024

Full report:

https://nlt.cdn.ngo/media/documents/Children_and_young_peoples_writing_in_2024.pdf

Press release/outline: <https://literacytrust.org.uk/news/latest-research-reveals-childrens-writing-crisis/>

(Source: National Literacy Trust *Monthly Newsletter*, Jun 2024)

This report outlines findings from the 2024 Annual Literacy Survey, exploring children and young people’s writing enjoyment at school and in their free time.

Key findings include:

- “Fewer than 3 in 10 (28.7%) 8 to 18-year-olds say they enjoy writing in their free time – the lowest level recorded by the charity since it first started asking children about their writing in 2010.
- 1 in 9 (11.1%) say they write daily in their free time, halving in the past 12 months (19.3% in 2023).

- 1 in 3 (35.7%) say they rarely or never write in their free time, a troubling increase of 55% (12.7 percentage points) in the same time.” [Press release]

However, there is a positive note with:

- “[...] more children and young people who received free school meals (FSMs) than those who did not (34.2% vs. 26.1%) said that they enjoyed writing in their free time.” [Report, p5]

Jonathan Douglas (CE of the NLT) emphasised that:

“It is now time to provide children and young people with more meaningful opportunities, both in and out of school, to reconnect with the creative elements of writing which transform it into an enjoyable activity that allows for self-expression and that works as a tool to process struggles, make sense of the world and participate actively in civic life.” [Press release]