



Commonwealth Secretariat

Organising Book Exhibitions

Commonwealth Education Handbooks

Organising Book Exhibitions

Martyn Goff

Commonwealth Secretariat

COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT

Marlborough House, Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5HX

First published 1981

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ISBN 0 85092 209 7

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Printed and published by the Commonwealth Secretariat

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INTRODUCTION

It is generally accepted that books are an unrivalled source of cultural enrichment, new knowledge and social and educational understanding. They provide lasting pleasure. They preserve the wisdom of the past, communicate the perceptions of the present, and generate ideas which shape the future.

In order to satisfy the book hunger of their peoples, Commonwealth countries are expanding their publishing and printing industries, extending their library services, and taking action in a variety of ways to promote the reading habit. The Commonwealth Book Development Programme, administered by this Division, was established to assist member countries in these tasks. The publication of this handbook on book exhibitions is one element in the Programme. Produced in response to a recommendation made by the Eighth Commonwealth Education Conference, it is offered to all individuals, groups and organisations which have a particular interest in improving book promotion. We are indebted to Martyn Goff for preparing it for us.

Book exhibitions are recognised as being one of the most effective ways of stimulating an interest in books. Large exhibitions can attract adults and children in their thousands. Small ones can be arranged to accompany a specialist conference, draw attention to books on particular subject, demonstrate the capabilities of a local publishing industry, enable a school to supplement its library stock, and serve a host of other purposes. They are not difficult to organise, but they do demand careful planning and considerable attention to detail. This handbook provides advice on many practical measures to ensure that nothing is overlooked, that potential pitfalls are

avoided, and that the resulting exhibition is attractive, effective and succesful.

We hope this handbook will serve as a source of encouragement and assistance to all who are interested in the development of the book industry through holding exhibitions which are designed to bring books to the attention of the public.

Rex E O Akpofure
Director
Education Division
Commonwealth Secretariat

CHAPTER ONE

WHO ORGANISES?

The Individual as Organiser

A book exhibition may be organised by anyone. Often the leading spirit is a librarian or a teacher. Not only do these two sorts of people in particular realise the value of books and the huge range of them that exists, but they also often have the knowledge of how to categorise them.

The Committee

Even if it is an individual who starts the ball rolling, a committee is usually needed to plan and carry out the idea. Book exhibitions entail a great deal of detailed work, as we shall see as we read on. It's very unlikely that one person can find the time to carry out all the necessary jobs. A small band of helpers is the answer.

But our committee has a further important function. If co-operation is to be secured from an organisation with the ideal site; from all the many people who have to be contacted to get the exhibition known and talked about; from (sometimes) bank managers and solicitors and accountants; from caretakers and decorators and printers; then the chances are that six or eight people across a range of interests will be able to do this more easily than one person working alone.

Who's on the Committee?

The first rule is as few as possible. The larger the committee, the longer the meetings; the longer the

meetings, the lower the enthusiasm. The committee needs neither speechmakers nor passengers. Each person on it should serve a definite purpose. First comes the person who inspired the whole idea. Whatever his or her other abilities, it's that person's continuing enthusiasm, despite all difficulties and setbacks, that the committee will value. Then if there are likely to be financial problems (see Chapter 2) it's good to have someone really numerate, someone whose daily job, preferably, is dealing with figures: bank manager or clerk; chief cashier; accountant or auditor. That way money won't be wasted.

Next you need a librarian or someone closely connected with whatever local libraries exist. Such persons understand the problems of obtaining books, cataloguing them, sorting them and so on. They also probably know other book people, from local author to local bookseller, or at least how to get in touch with them.

You need a couple of people who are just doers, people who will lend themselves to shifting - or arranging to be shifted - bookcases, trestle tables, shelves and boxes of books. Of course if such people know the editors of local papers or the controllers of local radio stations, so much the better. If they can actually persuade a Minister or an Ambassador or other high dignitary to open or visit the exhibition, then that alone will have earned them a place.

Finally, you need a chairman. Such a person must remain cool, must be willing to shut up talkative people and encourage silent ones to speak, be used to taking overall views, be willing to delegate (but keep an eye on detail). Naturally there aren't many such people around, but a person with these virtues in lesser or greater degree will make the chairman you need.

CHAPTER TWO

MONEY MATTERS

Who Provides the Finance?

In almost every case you are going to need some money. "Almost" because it is possible for a library to put on an exhibition itself with little or no cost that cannot be met out of its normal resources. But this is rare. Mostly there has to be some cash to cover expenses. Where can it come from? It is possible to raise money by self-help methods such as selling raffle tickets, auctioning gifts, or even charging people to come to the exhibition (though in that case advance funds are still needed to get it all going). More likely, some money will have to be found from outside sources - a business sponsor for example. The sums likely to be involved are not very big, and a large company - particularly if it has international connections - might be pleased to be seen sponsoring a book exhibition. "To be seen" means making sure that the company is given credit for its generosity on posters, tickets, handbills and in any press release or press handouts.

Library or education authorities may be able to help; so may such bodies as national book development councils, state ministries, and arts associations. Local branches of international clubs, like Lions or Rotary, may be willing to raise money by staging events or just by asking their members for contributions.

Newspapers and magazines are often quite keen to be seen sponsoring events like book exhibitions. However, a small warning is necessary in such cases. If one paper sponsors an event it will certainly give it a good deal

of publicity. On the other hand the chances are that all other papers and local radio stations and the like will give it scant coverage: otherwise they feel they are advertising their rivals.

Finally there are occasionally rich individuals who will help, sometimes on their own, sometimes by offering a sum provided it is matched by other well-to-do supporters. Here a personal contact with such a person or persons is absolutely vital.

What Must the Money Buy?

First and foremost the place where the exhibition is going to be held. This may be a classroom or a corner of a library, the entrance of a hotel or part of the town hall. The chances are that there will be a hiring fee plus charges for lighting (and heating if the weather is cold); and for porters or caretakers to come in at special times to open or lock up the place and keep an eye on things.

The second charge on the money is labour. Helpers are needed to design the exhibition, set it up, look after it whenever it is open to the public, unpack and check the books, pack them again after it's all over and send them on elsewhere. Volunteers may do some or all of these things, but if they don't, then money has to be found to pay for them.

Equally you want the exhibition to be visited by as many people as possible. So you want as much publicity as you can generate. This may involve paying for posters, handbills and invitation cards, and for phone calls to schools, offices, libraries and other places. There's almost certain to be a bill for all sorts of different postages, whether for books or letters. There may be the cost of adverts in newspapers and magazines, at bus stops, or on hoardings.

Then of course there are the books themselves. Publishers, wholesalers or booksellers may lend books to put on

show, but even if they do they will expect you to pay for any that are lost or stolen - and unfortunately there are nearly always some of each. You may also want to have a selling point. (See Chapter 15.) This may mean having the books charged to you and receiving credits for those you fail to sell. This, too, may involve some expenditure before the actual selling begins to bring in money.

So you may need money for space, staff, promotion and stock; and there are bound to be claims for administration: post, telephone, petrol, stationery and refreshments. Busy workers need tea or coffee and some sandwiches if nothing else; and they must be paid for.

CHAPTER THREE

SUITABLE SITES

Where the People Are

If an exhibition is being held in conjunction with a conference, seminar or workshop, then the site to choose is one that all delegates are bound to pass several times a day. Just inside the entrance to the building where the meeting is being held; between the conference room and the cloakrooms; on the way to lunch or other refreshments: any of these will ensure that most of the delegates will notice the exhibition.

Up to a point, siting an exhibition that accompanies a meeting is comparatively easy: the people coming to the meeting are automatically interested in the subject under discussion; they are motivated to see what books there are on that subject. A more general exhibition presents greater problems. Let's take an actual example.

A school decides it wants parents and children to see a range of books that it would like to see in its library. Perhaps they hope that some of the parents will be able to buy a book or two and present them to the library. For most people there is no natural motivation to look at these books, so they must be placed at a point where they force themselves on the attention of parents and children alike. If the exhibition is going to be held at the same time as a parent-teacher meeting or a prize-giving ceremony, then every effort must be made to ensure the book exhibition is placed where it is almost impossible to miss it - plenty of people will still do so! At the top of a flight of stairs; immediately adjoining the exit from the hall; or, if weather allows open-

air showing, just outside the main entrance facing people as they come out, are all possibilities.

In the same way book exhibitions accompanying other exhibitions must be carefully placed. Whether it's a huge flower show or an exhibition of farm machinery, the accompanying books must be placed where everyone has a chance to see them without going down corridors and on to different floors.

Public Buildings, Hotels, Bookshops, Libraries

The foyer of a town hall or large hotel can be ideal provided the book exhibition is not pushed into a dark corner. A bookshop, on the other hand, can be a tricky place to put an exhibition because it is already full of books. Some way must be found of distinguishing between the books in the exhibition and those belonging to the stock of the shop: a roped-off area, special lighting, some form of fencing, or a raised area are all possibilities. Public libraries, too, may have to find a solution to this problem. Usually, however, they have a foyer, entrance hall or other space where an exhibition can be held. If so, you may find no better place. Everyone knows where the local library is. Many members of the community will visit it regularly and will welcome the opportunity to see the exhibition on their way into or out of the building. In addition, library opening hours are usually arranged to enable people to visit the library - and therefore the exhibition - after work when other places are closed.

CHAPTER FOUR

CHOOSING THE TITLES

No Easy Task

Sometimes you may be able to hire a ready-made exhibition which is being sent from place to place to promote an interest in books. If so, the titles will have already been selected. More often, however, decisions on what to include will form an important part of the planning process. How should the decisions be made, and who are the best people to make them?

The first consideration is the target area: Who is to be moved or influenced by the show of books? Well, if it's a conference of chemists, then the answer is fairly easy. It may still need an expert to choose the exact books that are complementary to the themes being discussed at the conference. Perhaps you have just such a person on the exhibition's organising committee. If not, you are sure to find a librarian or a writer with the necessary expertise to produce a list of books that matches or enlarges what is going to be discussed or is of special interest to the delegates.

When we move to more general areas, it all becomes more difficult. An exhibition of children's books to try to stimulate a greater interest in reading or book possession immediately lays open the whole world of taste, opinion and prejudice. Some experts favour this group of reading schemes; some that; and each believes that those advocated by the others are bad if not perniciously dangerous! The National Book League in Britain, has an annual Children's Books of the Year Exhibition consisting of the 350 best books from the previous year chosen

by an internationally recognised expert. But still there are reviewers who fault the choice; and 350 is barely 10 per cent of one year's output of children's books in Britain, let alone all the many thousands appearing in other countries.

Usually, 350-500 titles form a good collection for a non-specialist book exhibition.

How to make the Selection

The best answer is to choose the most expert person available, be he teacher, librarian, children's book-seller or critic, and give him his head. True, the task can be done by committee if everyone on the committee is of expert status, but the choice is likely to lack bite. Committees are notorious for compromise, and compromise is rarely the characteristic needed if a display of books is to alert, startle or excite the visitor. The selector should be told as many details as possible about the target group: age, background, education, interests, reading ability (where known); and then should be left to get on with it. He should also be told how many books there is room for, making sure that the figure is calculated to allow generous space to each book. A crowded exhibition is almost always dispiriting, though on the other hand books swimming in space are not conducive to browsing either.

The selector should be among the first people to start work once the organising committee has decided to go ahead with the exhibition. Not only can the selection itself be a long process, the books themselves may take months to arrive. The list has to go to publishers or other suppliers, and the titles requested have to be looked out, packed and delivered. There is a school of thought that says that dynamic exhibitions are completed at the very last minute under conditions of great drama. It may sound romantic, but it is nonsense; and usually, a very great strain on all concerned.

CHAPTER FIVE

AN EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

The list prepared by the selector for ordering the books can serve a further purpose: it can form the basis of a catalogue to accompany the exhibition. If the audience is going to be a very general one, no catalogue may be needed: the books themselves may be sufficient. But a more specialised audience - chemists or teachers, football players or geologists - will almost certainly want to read or refer to some of the books they see at the exhibition, and they will be grateful if they can pick up a catalogue of the books on display and take it away with them.

A Catalogue or a List?

A stencilled list will often do the trick. It costs little to produce: typewriter, stencil, paper, and someone's time (and infinite care!). If you can afford to give copies away, you can expect it to be very popular. The trouble is that a stencilled list has little permanence and not much authority. It may be absolutely accurate and contain all the relevant information, yet still seem slightly makeshift. If authority or permanence are what you want, a printed catalogue is the answer. It is, however, the most expensive way to list the books.

Two examples of pages from printed catalogues are given in Appendix A; one from an exhibition of children's books, the other from an exhibition of Commonwealth literature. Both are annotated. Part of an unannotated list appears as Appendix C and part of a stencilled list as Appendix B.

Getting the Number Right

It may be that the funds raised for the exhibition are sufficient to cover the cost of a printed catalogue. The likelihood, though, is that they are not. You are then faced with the difficulty of working out how many copies of a catalogue have to be sold at a given price to recover the outlay of producing them, or, better, of making a profit. The first rule here is to avoid extreme over-estimation of possible sales. Every publisher of every different sort of book can tell you hard luck stories of books that didn't sell nearly as well as expected. But whereas they can balance losses on one title against gains on others, you can't. You, as the producer of a catalogue for an exhibition, are bringing out one title only: you cannot recoup any losses on its sale with profits from a past or future bestseller.

In choosing the right number to print, past experience of exhibition attendance is invaluable. If you know that a similar exhibition a year or two back was attended by 1,000 people, then, other things being equal, you might hope for the same attendance again. If the price of the catalogue can be kept low, then you might guess that one in four people will be tempted to buy a copy. Can it be produced and sold at a price that means that the original outlay is recovered on a 250 sale? Or, better, a 200 sale? If so, then it is probably a worthwhile risk to print 400 or 500 copies. But beware of the temptation to overprint: the run-on price for another 500 or 1,000 is so reasonable, the printer explains. But however reasonable, if you don't sell the original number there is absolutely no point in having extra copies whatever the price.

If you decide to have a printed catalogue, make sure to get estimates from more than one printer. It may even repay the time to get four or five. In order to prepare an estimate, the printer will need to know several things. They include the size of the page, the number of pages, the number of illustrations (if any), the type of cover, any colour printing required (e.g. on the cover), the type

of binding, the date the copy will be ready for printing, and the date the finished copies are required. Someone on the committee is sure to be able to prepare a printing specification or to know a suitable person who can be asked to help.

Given the right information, the printers you approach can give you estimates for various print runs (e.g. 400, 500, 750 and 1,000 copies). You can also ask for a specimen page, or a page from something similar that the printer has already produced, so that you know exactly what to expect. With this information you can decide which estimate to accept. Probably it will be the lowest, but you may prefer to take a slightly higher estimate if you have reason to believe that the quality of the work or the reliability of the service justify the extra expense.

It is vital that material in a catalogue is 100% correct: titles, author, publisher, ISBN (International Standard Book Number) where available, and annotations if required. However good the compiler, there should be someone to counter-check the work and ensure that the material is correctly marked-up. The printer is only responsible for seeing that what he is given is correctly printed according to the instructions he receives. Alterations to printed material can be expensive, so make sure that errors in the proofs are not your fault or you can expect to have to pay the printer for correcting them.

When the exhibition opens, do not put out all the catalogues at once : they must be rationed, though obviously more will be required at the official opening than at other times.

CHAPTER SIX

GETTING THE BOOKS

From a Publisher

Every publisher has books in his warehouse that he wants the public to know about; indeed, he usually has quantities of each title which he will be glad to have displayed at book exhibitions. He may therefore be willing to lend the books for exhibition purposes; or he may want to charge them to the organisers, later crediting all those returned in mint condition and only charging for missing or damaged titles.

An example of a specimen letter informing a publisher about a forthcoming exhibition and asking him to provide titles for display, appears as Appendix D. It should, of course, be modified to meet your particular circumstances.

Where there are local publishers or agents of foreign publishers whose books cover the subjects being exhibited, this is clearly the easiest way to obtain the necessary stock. Problems may arise, however, if they want to deal only through local booksellers. There may be two reasons for this. First, the publisher may not want the bother of supplying lots of single orders, which is usually what is wanted for an exhibition; and this is particularly true if the publisher is computerised. Second, the publisher may not want to upset booksellers by by-passing them; and booksellers are often anxious when they see publishers dealing directly with the consumer and leaving them out. This anxiety is increased if there is a selling point at the exhibition (Chapter 15). Where any such

difficulties arise, it is better to offer the local bookseller, or a consortium of local booksellers, the opportunity of providing the books.

From a Bookseller

A bookseller may be delighted to provide the books for an exhibition, but he will almost certainly be more strict than a publisher on conditions for their return. The publisher may, and often does, regard books provided for exhibition purposes as expendable;"promotion expenditure" in other words. The bookseller may still hope to sell the books he supplies to an exhibition, since he has had to pay for them and he will have no budget for promoting titles, only for advertising his shop.

From Wholesalers

Wholesalers, where they exist, will happily supply the books, but will almost certainly expect to sell them to the organisers of the exhibition. This can enormously increase the cost of putting on the exhibition. You cannot expect to recover this expense from sales, though very occasionally there are people who will buy books after the show (for instance tertiary-level books being displayed in a college of higher education).

From a Library

As a rule then, you will be hoping to obtain books on loan from publishers, but there may be instances when they can be borrowed from a library. A local librarian, having a good stock in the subjects to be exhibited, may be willing to lend all or some of the books required.

A number of successful book exhibitions have combined new stock obtained from publishers and booksellers with used stock obtained from libraries. If you decide to follow this procedure, check that every title on display is marked in some way so that it can be returned to the original supplier.

Back-up Stock

Only on very rare occasions are books not pilfered or damaged during an exhibition. You will therefore have to decide in advance what to do about back-up stock. If replacements have to come from overseas, it may be possible to get them in time by airmail; but this is expensive. In many parts of the world something like six months must be allowed for books to come from the nearest industrialised country.

CHAPTER SEVEN

UNPACKING AND CHECKING

Who Unpacks?

Wherever the books come from, someone must be deputed to unpack and check them. Publishers are only human; unless, that is, they employ computers which are less than human. This means that there will be mistakes at the despatching end: there always are. For this reason there is no substitute for careful and painstaking checking of the contents of each parcel, either against an invoice enclosed with that parcel, or, if the invoice is coming separately by post, against a contents list. So choose someone who is reliable, methodical and patient to unpack the books, check them, and look for errors.

There are three main categories of error:

- (a) Omission: a title missing or too few copies of one enclosed.
- (b) Inclusion: a title not ordered or requested, or too many copies of an ordered title.
- (c) Confusion: the wrong, though usually similar, title to the one ordered; or the right title and wrong author; or the wrong part of a book of a multi-volume title.

All errors should be notified to the supplier, whether publisher, bookseller or wholesaler, immediately you detect them. If the parcel is undamaged, that is all you need to do; if it is damaged or broken, then a copy of the notification should be sent to the shipper or deliverer. And if the parcel is badly split open and damaged,

then the original complaint should go to the shipper, copy to the publisher.

Checking the Price

Once it has been ascertained that the right books are in the parcel and in good condition, the next point to check is if they are priced. If the habit of the publisher in a particular country of publication is to print the price on the blurb, then the unpacker should check that it is there. The chances are that in one case out of twenty it won't be; and a price, taken from the invoice or contents note, must then be pencilled in. If, on the other hand, the book has been produced in a country where prices are not normally printed on the book, then every book will have to be priced in pencil on the first blank page inside the cover. The same is true if local prices are different from those printed on the books. It is difficult to over-emphasise the need for constant attention to ensure that all books on show are correctly priced. Visitors to book exhibitions always want to know how much a book costs. No one during the running of the show is likely to be able to spare the time to wade through the original supplying invoices to check the price of a book.

In the unlikely event of there being no contents note, and the invoice coming under separate cover has not arrived, you should phone the publisher or supplier for missing prices, or seek the help of the nearest library with up-to-date bibliographical material. Failure to do this over even one book is almost guaranteeing that someone will enquire the price of that book at the busiest moment of the whole exhibition!

The invoices themselves should either be sorted alphabetically by publisher or be numbered, entered into a day-book, giving date, publisher's name and amount of total. The second of these alternatives makes tracing a particular invoice a longer business, but avoids having dozens of small files, each devoted to one publisher.

Sorting the Books

It is important not only to unpack books methodically, but to know what to do with them once they are unpacked. Piles of unattended books are a great temptation. Even if no one "borrows" one, it is certain that they will be moved, shuffled, disordered. Many people cannot resist touching, handling, leafing through books; and such people rarely replace them where they were. (If any readers doubt this, let them place a pile of books on their living-room table when guests are coming. By the time the guests leave, the order in the pile - if indeed there is still any sort of pile at all - will have been completely changed!)

All things being equal, it is best not to unpack books until the exhibition stands are set up and ready to take them. Unpacking and checking then takes place almost simultaneously with setting out. Often, however, it is necessary to unpack in advance; and doing so does have the advantage of providing time to get errors and omissions put right. In the latter case, there must be a secure room or secure cupboards set aside. "Secure" here means lockable (see Chapter 8).

Very large exhibitions displaying thousands of titles will need small teams of people to unpack and arrange the books. Smaller shows, perhaps up to 500 titles, can often be handled by one or two people. Either way someone ought to have done a good deal of pre-planning to decide where different sorts of books are going to be located in the exhibition room. Often there is too little space for them to be laid out prior to determining their final arrangement. So, using the order lists, the arranger(s) should allocate space for each subject or publisher or category; and move each parcel to its appropriate space as soon as its contents are known.

When setting out the books, the following procedure may be helpful. First put the books in piles on the subject tables or stands allocated to them. Next, spread them out so as to find out how much space they need. If there are

too many books to fill the space set aside for one section, and too few for another, you may be able to put the two sections side by side. Finally, arrange the books carefully in each section so that: (a) those on similar topics are close together (e.g. by putting books on Africa in one part of a Geography section and books on Asia in another); and (b) the section as a whole looks attractive. Do remember to check the exhibition regularly so as to replace books correctly when visitors put them down carelessly.

Where do the Books go Afterwards?

At this stage of the lead-up to the exhibition a clear decision needs to be taken (or ascertained if it is someone else's decision) as to what will happen to the books at the end of the show. Are they going on to another venue? Are they going back to the publisher? Are they being sold as second-hand books to benefit the organisation's funds? In every one of these cases, packing materials will be required. So not only must books be carefully checked on being unpacked, but if possible the very packing materials in which the books arrive should be retained. Space must therefore be found to store the packing materials safely during the run of the exhibition itself. It is no use saving nice boxes if over-efficient cleaners whisk them away when nobody is around to stop them.

All this requires fairly rigorous advance planning. If a space or cupboard has been set aside for empty cartons and packages, then they won't get lost or damaged. If a room has been allocated in advance for stock arriving early, then the chances are that that stock will remain intact in every sense. For it must never be forgotten that, except in the case of a tiny exhibition, it is not likely that all the books will arrive together; or that they will arrive neatly at the balanced rate of so many packages a day. Inevitably some packages will arrive days or even weeks before the specified delivery date; and some on the very day the exhibition opens. The more steps that have been taken to deal with such situations, the less organisational headaches there will be at the last moment.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CARE AND SECURITY

Anyone Watching?

The snag about choosing exhibition sites where there is a strong human traffic flow (Chapter 3) is that they need a lot of policing. It is not very logical but remains unfortunately true that many people feel less compunction about stealing books than almost anything else. This may in part be due to the fact that in most countries books can be borrowed free from libraries; and in many countries, too, books are provided free in parts of the education system. People become used to getting the books they want without paying for them, and this seems to spill over into occasions when the books are not free and cannot be borrowed other than by stealing.

This piece of amateur psychology apart, it remains true that all bookshops, libraries and book exhibitions report a high percentage of book thefts, and that this percentage is closely related to the amount of strict invigilation. Since invigilation becomes more difficult in crowded places, it follows that the need for the utmost vigilance in the sort of site we have been suggesting is essential.

There are hundreds of ways of pilfering books, but most of them need some form of receptacle into which to slip the book. It may not be possible to make people leave their bags, satchels and briefcases at the door; but if it is, so much the better. Coats with large pockets or folded over the arm can easily camouflage stolen books. So can other books brought to the exhibition. The bearer places his book or books on top of some of those being

exhibited and then picks up the display book when he retrieves his own. Or he brings in a cheap second-hand book and substitutes it for an expensive new one on display, perhaps disguising the act by wrapping the jacket of the display book round the cheap one.

Mind my Book!

Stealing, however common, is not the invigilator's only problem. Damage is another. People drop books, denting the corners or breaking the spine. They grip or open them with dirty hands. Worse, they mark books, yes even books on display, with pencils, pens and turned-down corners. They deface pictures of personalities they don't like - such as politicians or film stars. They even detach pictures, particularly if they are dramatic, erotic, or depict a sporting event.

Invigilators must be taught that they are not there primarily to read books or pass the time of the day with visitors. They are there to invigilate, which means keeping a constant and eagle eye on the books and on everyone who comes to look at them. And somehow they must do this without upsetting or putting the visitors off. On the contrary, they must make them feel wanted, must answer their questions and kindle their enthusiasm. Keep these things in mind when choosing invigilators, and prepare a roster if necessary so as to ensure that several invigilators are on duty whenever the exhibition is open.

CHAPTER NINE

ATTRACTING THE PUBLIC

A Book is a Book is a Book

Those who spend most of their working lives dealing with books become obsessed with them. Arriving in Agra they ask for the local bookshop instead of the Taj Mahal; in Sydney for the State Library instead of the Opera House or Harbour Bridge! It is so normal for them to seek out books that they forget that for many people books are low down on the list of priorities. If this were not so, it might not be necessary to organise book exhibitions in the first place. As it is, we must recognise that books in themselves are not a great draw. We must be prepared to use other attractions to persuade people to come to look at books, or find other ways of making books seem exciting and attractive to the non-bookman.

How can this be done? Here is one example.

A few years ago a book fair, called the "Bedford Square Bookbang", was organised in one of London's most unspoilt eighteenth century squares. The fair had two basic principles behind it:

- (a) The general public is not interested in the publishers themselves; so it is no use having, as in many book fairs, stands devoted to individual publishers. The public in the main only know of subjects - history, biography, maths, sociology, and so on - so that was how the fair had to be organised. (This presented problems of financing, manning and the like).

(b) The public will not come for the books alone, so there must be a lot of other attractions. But the books had to be there, well displayed, when the people arrived for whatever reasons. Among the attractions were: (i) a real circus (mainly for the children); (ii) poets reading their verses from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.; (iii) authors signing and selling their own books at costermonger barrows; (iv) key appearances by celebrities; (v) a fair-ground atmosphere so that even the most non-book person would not be put off entering; (vi) food and drink in an improvised cafe; and (vii) laundry boxes piled higgledy-piggledy with books for very young children to rummage through.

The principles involved in the Bedford Square Bookbang, whether reduced to a fraction of the size or blown into something two, three, four times as big, remain constant: you use other displays and events to lure people into looking at books.

Bookbang, however, was very ambitious. It cost some £60,000 to mount and took in only half that sum, so the publishers (80 of them in fact) were left to find the £30,000 shortfall; a not unreasonable sum for a fortnight's fair that gained maximum publicity.

Posting the News

If we keep the principles of Bookbang in mind but switch back to much more modest scales, then what are the main ancillary materials we can use to draw attention to the book exhibition in the first place? Above all there are posters. Simple, well designed posters can be put in town halls, libraries, shops, bus stations, in fact almost anywhere. Of course if funds are ample it is nice to have them in four or more colours. But one colour on white or black on white, if effectively designed, will catch the eye nearly as well.

The design must catch the eye. The content must be the smallest number of words to convey the largest amount of information. The most essential items of information are:

- (a) The place of the exhibition.
- (b) The dates from when it will start to when it will finish (inclusive).
- (c) The times and days it is open.
- (d) A short main title plus an explanatory sub-title: e.g. "Commonwealth Literature: an exhibition of 500 books by authors from all parts of the Commonwealth".
- (e) Means of getting there (where applicable): e.g. "Buses 13 and 23 pass the door".
- (f) Cost of entry, if any: e.g. "free" or "\$1 entrance fee".
- (g) The organiser(s) if this adds lustre: e.g. "His Excellency the Eldorado Ambassador's Book Exhibition".
- (h) Anything else that is likely to encourage people to attend: e.g. "One free balloon for every visiting child", or "Famous authors signing copies of their books every lunchtime".

An example of a poster lay-out is given as Appendix E.

If the exhibition is going to visit a number of places, the poster can be designed so that the constant information is printed at the top and bottom and the centre is left blank so as to allow specific details of each place (site, times, transport etc.) to be inserted there.

In order to make a poster more attractive, publishers can sometimes be persuaded to lend the block of a book illustration that is particularly suitable for a given

exhibition. This is often true with children's books. Alternatively a block from a tourist organisation might be used to show a suitable scene that describes the subject or site of the exhibition. In such cases care must be taken to give a small credit on the poster itself to the co-operating organisation: e.g. "With acknowledgements to the Eldorado Tourist Board for the photograph of the Tower". In this way a lavish design can be secured for a poster at a comparatively low cost.

The Right Number to Print

The number of posters required should be carefully calculated. When you have reckoned up the likely sites that will display it, and added a small number for damaged or spoiled posters, the print run should be fixed. Blandishments from printers that the run-on cost for a further 100 or 1,000 isn't really very much, should be resisted. However little the extra cost is, it is a waste of money if some of the posters are not going to be used.

Wherever possible copies of the poster should be displayed in strength around the building where the exhibition is being shown. They will serve to remind people passing by the building of the posters they have seen elsewhere and reawaken their interest in the exhibition. Put further copies inside the building as well.

Design to Attract

Compared to the problem of displaying books in an exhibition, designing and printing posters is a comparatively easy task. Except to the specialist, books on their own do not make seductive displays. Book lovers will of course go to look at books anywhere and everywhere, but other people need to have their interest heightened. It is therefore very useful to prepare ancillary material which will attract people's interest and lead them on to the books themselves.

Such material can be simple and still be very effective. Thus, large cartoons on card or paper above the books can simultaneously attract the eye and then divert it to the books below. For example, a dramatic photograph or cartoon of a broken-down car or lorry - humorous if possible - with a movement within the picture that directs the eye down to the display of a group of books on vehicle maintenance will almost always do the trick. Equally, the message is clear if the picture shows a crying or bored child with some exciting children's books in front of or underneath it.

Certain subjects, such as cookery, lend themselves to non-book displays more easily than others. Bowls of spices or fruits, huge cakes and unusual loaves will always draw attention; so will flower displays if they are big enough and bright enough. Children's books can be accompanied by children's toys, though here one can run into trouble with the younger visitors: they want to take the toys home with them! What matters about the ancillary material is that it catches people's attention. If it does that, and if it has some relevance to the subject covered by the books, it can only be a plus for the exhibition.

Where there is a lot of space, say in the foyer of a town hall or large library, the placing of an unlikely object will immediately alert the attention of anyone coming near it. It is often possible to borrow without charge a new car as long as the dealer gets a card with a credit to him on it. If it is a new model, or a special version of an existing one, it will create a great deal of interest and is suitable for any book exhibition featuring engineering, travel or motoring do-it-yourself books. In the same way a new piece of farm machinery is suitable for books dealing with agriculture or the countryside.

Blown-up photographs - whether of authors, scenes from the books being displayed, or just connected to the books by subject - will always take the eye of the

passer-by or visitor. If the books deal with a particular country, then tourist offices or travel agents may be able to supply posters or photographs of places in that country. Publishers have photographs of their authors and will often supply free blow-ups of these at no cost: they treat it as part of their promotion of those authors.

Lighting Effects

To attract people to exhibitions of art books, pictures or prints can sometimes be borrowed from a local gallery or private collector. So can pieces of sculpture. The latter can often be dramatically lit without much trouble or expense and thus constitute an instant eye-catcher. Lighting in itself is a valuable way of drawing attention either to the exhibition itself in large spaces or to individual parts of it, or even to single books. It does, however, need to be set up by someone with expert knowledge, because the wiring must be safe and the angle of the lighting carefully calculated to highlight exactly the required areas, and in a way that anyone looking at the books doesn't cut the beam off just by being there.

Spotlights can occasionally be borrowed from local drama companies or theatres. Alternatively an electrical contractor may be willing to lend them, and indeed set them up, in return for a prominent credit giving his name and address. Such credits can either be on struttred cards placed next to or among the books or be fastened by drawing pins to near-by walls or screens. Credits should also appear in any catalogue, lists or leaflets connected with the exhibition. If those helping in the ways suggested, or in other ways, see that their help is prominently acknowledged, they are more likely to help again on other occasions.

Giving the Details

As has already been pointed out, book exhibitions for specialists do not need ancillary material to catch the eye and draw the passer-by to look at them, but they do need other aids. The specialist is likely to want to buy or borrow some of the books on display and for that he needs to know the details. Of course he can get them from the blurb or title page, but he is more likely to take note of the essential information about a book if it is neatly typed or handwritten on a card next to the book itself. Such cards should contain title, author, publisher, price, and, where available, International Standard Book Number (ISBN). Ideally they should also have a brief annotation, perhaps four or five lines, describing why the particular book has special qualities that ought to be noticed by the visitor: e.g. "This is a revised edition of a standard work first published in 1957, containing a lot of new material in the light of the discovery of X's letters". The visitor knows then at once why this book may be of special interest to him.

Annotated cards involve quite a lot of thoughtful preparation if they are to do more than merely repeat what is written in a catalogue. Where the wording has to be original, it is essential that it is done by an expert in the field. The cards also have to be typed, checked (and double-checked) and carefully placed next to the titles to which they refer. They can cause more trouble than they are worth if visitors pick up books and put them down again in the wrong place. Better just to have title, author, publisher, ISBN and price than misleading or ill-balanced annotation. Let your committee decide whether cards are worth-while or not.

CHAPTER TEN

CELEBRITIES

Catch a live author

Cards, photographs, posters, all these things and many more help to draw attention to book exhibitions, but the biggest single attraction in most cases is a live author. Two or three live authors, of course, increase this attraction. Most people in most walks of life who enjoy reading books want to meet well-known authors; so too, do many non-readers provided the authors are famous enough. The first rule, then, is to look for an author with sufficient rating in the area being covered for people to want to meet him or her. Not everyone will have heard of Michel Guérard who invented cuisine minceur - a form of French cooking that preserves the authentic flavour while avoiding the use of rich or fat sauces - but anyone really interested in modern cooking will know the name and turn out to meet him - and see his and other cookery books while doing so.

Having decided to invite a suitable author to open the exhibition or visit it - someone who is likely to be available and whose travelling expenses will not be enormous - the next step in most cases is to approach that person's publisher with a request. Publishers both protect their authors from over-exposure and yet want them to be seen by their readers. So their response is likely to take into account the number of people expected at the exhibition at the time of the author's visit and the facilities for signing copies of the book (if any). To be able, in the first approach, to say: "We are expecting 300 guests to the opening party including the Lord Chief Justice", is much more likely to help the publisher to

persuade his author to attend than: "We don't know how many people will be there but we are inviting as many as 30".

On such occasions authors do not expect to be paid more than their expenses, and these will often be met by the publisher. But it is essential to make them feel how much the organisers value the visit. Care should be taken to greet the author on arrival and ensure that one or more members of the organising committee accompany him round the exhibition, see if he would like some refreshments, and tell him where the cloakroom is. Nothing is more daunting than to have to make a speech or spend half an hour autographing copies of a book while all the time urgently wanting the toilet.

Preliminaries

Even before the author's arrival, a letter should be written thanking him for accepting the invitation and giving details of the visit (e.g. the desired time of arrival, the length of the speech or stay for signing, and whether he is invited to lunch, a drink or dinner depending on the time of the day). If he is coming unaccompanied by the publisher, a route map should be enclosed. All this may sound very elementary, but it is unfortunately true that such details are frequently overlooked, so that the celebrity is cursing his agreement to come even before arriving. For this reason a phone call on the morning of the visit confirming all the arrangements can do wonders to ensure the arrival of the writer in an equable mood.

If the writer has come to the opening reception, then care must be taken to introduce him not only to other well-known people there, but to members of the organising committee. This may seem little more than a formality, but those who have contributed greatly in service and time do value being picked out to meet someone who, in all probability, everyone present would like to meet personally.

Foreign Visitors

When a writer is arriving from another country (perhaps he is making a world tour and his publisher has been able to arrange a stop-over that coincides with a book exhibition) the host's responsibility may be greater than just checking the details on the phone and greeting the celebrity at the door. There will be a hotel room to be booked, transport from hotel to exhibition to be arranged, and, if funds permit, a lunch or dinner at which the author can meet a small number of interesting people. Care must also be taken not to "switch off" when the speech or signing session is over, leaving the poor celebrity to find his own way back to the hotel, his own evening entertainment, and his own transport to the airport next morning.

Speaking and Signing Engagements

Visitors, however famous, should be encouraged to keep their speeches short. It is much better to leave an audience feeling "Oh, if only he'd gone on for another ten minutes", than "I thought he was never going to stop, didn't you?"

If an author has agreed to sign copies of his books, remember that it is a physically and mentally tiring business: physically because of the actual writing of the signature dozens and dozens of times, mentally because of the effort needed to say something to each person, however briefly. So keep the signing session down to a reasonable time, with an hour probably as the maximum. Don't forget, too, that your author, however famous, may turn up without a pen: have one waiting for him.

Tie-ins

If, as has been suggested, you are thinking of borrowing a picture or two from a local gallery or art group, you might take the idea a stage further by asking

a society or college to put on a picture display on the same theme as the book exhibition. Even if the books are not about fine art but about townscapes or landscapes or even town planning, there may well be a group of relevant pictures in some local collection which could serve as a supplementary attraction. But remember that this can cause problems, such as that of insurance: books are not usually of great value but pictures can be.

Similarly, a film may have relevance to one or more books in an exhibition. If so, overtures should be made to the manager of a cinema to see if it can be shown. All sorts of cross publicity can become possible with stills from the film at the exhibition, an announcement on screen about it, and so on.

Once having accepted the principle that a book exhibition can only gain by being connected with other things or events which a non-book public are likely to notice, then real effort should be made to figure out just where such tie-ins are possible.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

MEDIA PUBLICITY

Telling the Papers

The principal way of gaining widespread publicity for an exhibition is through the press and the media. Whatever the size or the scope of the exhibition, it is sure to interest the local newspaper. A very early approach should therefore be made to the paper (or, of course, papers if there are more than one). The opening shot should be a letter, short and specific, telling the editor that on such and such dates there will be an exhibition of certain sorts of books in this or that place, and giving the names of any celebrities who have agreed to open it or visit it. This should be followed by a phone call offering further information and eliciting questions.

It is important to be definite about one's objectives in talking to the press. What do you hope to achieve? What is your target audience? These are the types of questions they will ask. In addition, it is always helpful to be able to provide a newspaper with a human interest story. Anything or any person with strong local influence or background is suitable. Papers like exclusive stories, so if there are several connected with the exhibition or those involved with it, they should be parcelled out among the press with exclusivity in each case.

If, for example, the exhibition contains books dealing with the Second World War, then if someone connected with the book exhibition is a war hero or a concentration camp survivor, (or the son or daughter of one) there is a story straightaway. Or if a similar exhibition was held five

years earlier and someone was sufficiently spurred on by it to read for a degree in the subject, then that, too, is a story. Newspapers are always interested in people, so thought should be given to every aspect of those involved in the exhibition which might be turned into a newspaper paragraph.

Lead Times

Newspapers usually work pretty quickly. Magazines need longer "lead" times: they may go to press as much as six weeks in advance if they are monthly, or almost double that time if they are quarterly. Quite early in the planning stages of an exhibition, care needs to be taken to establish closing dates for copy for any journals that might be interested. Feature stories may need still longer lead times. Keep to any deadlines you are given, always remembering that one column of publicity at the beginning of an exhibition is worth hundreds at the end.

Occasionally a newspaper will do a whole feature about an exhibition. This is almost always tied to advertising, so it's a matter of convincing the paper that enough people will buy advertising space round the feature or supplement to make it worthwhile for them. They may also want assistance with the editorial matter in this case, though given the basic facts they will more often prepare the copy themselves.

It is worth remembering that editorial mention of an exhibition is almost always more telling than direct advertising. All of us tend to invest editorial copy with an authority (and indeed accuracy!) which we withhold from paid advertising, so it should be a high priority to make sure that mention is made of the exhibition, preferably on more than one occasion, before it opens.

Snapping the Start

Since local papers like publishing photographs of local happenings, an opening reception or party will almost always find them willing to send along a photographer to record the occasion. Press photographers usually have tight schedules, so they don't want to be kept waiting until "rest of the committee turns up" or "the chairman's aunt arrives". The session should be scheduled to take place at a given moment after the reception starts. (Half an hour after is usually ideal: most people who are coming have arrived; those leaving early have not yet started to go). These timings should be given to the press so that the photographer can arrange to arrive a few minutes before the session is due to start and to leave 15 or 20 minutes later. Such precision will give papers the confidence to send a photographer along.

Radio and TV

Radio and television are more demanding than newspapers because their "space", or air time, is more valuable. They need the same prior warning, though news and news features programmes are compiled at quite short notice; and they will nearly always respond to the opportunity of interviewing a well-known person. They may want to do this at the studio or at the show. Care must be taken to ensure that the exhibition itself is mentioned! There are plenty of cases where a famous author or writer-politician has been interviewed because of a book exhibition but at some stage in the interviewing or editing all mention of the exhibition has been dropped. The prime aim of the broadcasting station is to secure an interesting interview: the prime aim of the exhibition organisers is to secure mention of the exhibition. The radio and TV station will not forget its aim: on their part the exhibition organisers must ensure that the broadcast also features the exhibition.

Press Releases

In countries where there is effectively one local paper and one local radio station, direct contact of the sort outlined above is usually easy. Where, however, there are a number of papers and stations, then the first essential in announcing an exhibition is to issue a press release. This should be mailed to every possible outlet that might mention or feature the exhibition, including church magazines, work magazines, and club or society magazines as well as commercial ones. Boldly headed "Press Release", it should contain the basic facts of the exhibition - dates, times, place, transport, opening hours - followed by a brief description of what is being displayed, and ending with material that could be useful for quotes to anyone writing about it. Ideally, if funds allow, there should be a preliminary press release well before the exhibition, possibly soon after the committee has drawn up the initial plans. Then, a few weeks before the actual show, another press release should be distributed including the names of the opener, guest of honour and visiting celebrities, and giving other details.

Posting the News

Besides sending posters to schools, colleges and the like, you should consider sending them a press release. With any luck it will be put up on a notice board and further whet the appetite of those who read it. The difficulty with sending such promotion pieces to any large institution is addressing it to the right person. The head teacher or principal may do nothing more than glance at it and put it in the wastepaper basket; equally the registrar or secretary is likely to regard such announcements as not being directly germane to his or her work. Where literature is the real subject of the exhibition, the head of the English department (or equivalent for other tongues) is the most likely to want to spread the news. Similarly, for other subjects - such as engineering, sociology, medicine, and the law - the head of department is the person most likely to take real action.

Best of all is to send the press release not only to the head of department but also to a teacher or student in that department who is known to have an interest in the exhibition or in those involved with it!

Beat the Drum Locally

Local societies (we mentioned club and society magazines above) can usually be relied on to spring to attention when something affecting their interest is concerned. So an exhibition of railway books will almost always get the local railway society alerting its members; stamps will do the same with the philatelic society. More general groups, like Women's Institutes, Round Table, Lions and Rotary, require a more careful approach. So when you get in touch with them, list the reasons why their members might be pleased to have their attention drawn to the exhibition.

In short, publicity means letting as many people as possible know that the exhibition is taking place, at the same time giving them enough information to fire their interest and enthusiasm. It is virtually impossible to take too much trouble in doing this, but care should be taken not to waste publicity material - press releases included. It's useless informing papers or radio stations hundreds of miles away. It may sound nice to say that the exhibition got a mention so far off, but in practical terms the idea is to attract visitors, and people are unlikely to travel for long distances unless the exhibition is of the size and importance of the Frankfurt, Nice, Montreal or Delhi Book Fairs.

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE OPENING CEREMONY

Who to Invite?

The opening ceremony needs careful organising. It usually has three functions:

- (a) To thank all who have worked so hard to make the show possible.
- (b) To thank the press and media who have publicised it.
- (c) To ensure growing, self-generating publicity by inviting those who might loosely be termed "leaders of opinion".

In the third category we would expect to number chief librarians, head teachers, college principals, mayors and members of parliament, and representatives of education departments (where applicable) as well as of other municipal and government departments likely to have an interest in the subject being displayed. Leaders of the community, too, should be asked, whether they are tribal chiefs or bankers or industrialists. The great thing is to make sure that the guest list has been checked and re-checked by those competent to know who should be there: important people omitted, however accidentally, can take great offence.

Plugging in

Everything must be done, in however a simple manner, to make the opener's ride easy. So if he or she is known

to require the text or notes of a speech, there ought to be some sort of lectern, however makeshift. An orange-box carefully covered with coloured paper and placed at a slight tilt on a table will serve quite well. If the hall or space is large, then there ought to be amplifying equipment unless the speaker is known to have a stentorian voice, or, as in the case of an actor or actress, a voice that is well trained to carry a distance. Here again, you do not need anything particularly elaborate: an amplifier, a couple of small speakers and a microphone will do the trick. But find out well in advance where the electrical outlets are, what sort of plugs are required, and how much electrical cable is needed; and ensure that everything is available on the day - plus screwdriver, scissors and a strip of insulating tape.

Platform

Most openers prefer to speak from a raised platform. In schools, church and community halls, these often exist. Where necessary it is easy to construct a small makeshift one that will allow the speaker to be more easily seen and heard by the audience.

Press Facilities

The press, too, may require special facilities, though these are usually confined to a telephone with easy access in case they want to phone through an immediate story, and somewhere they can sit during the speech-making to make notes. If the opener or chairman of the proceedings is speaking from a prepared text, then a copy of this can be very useful to the press present.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

KEEPING RECORDS

What Really Happened

When organising a book exhibition, each stage seems so fresh in the mind that it seems as though it can never be forgotten. Within as little as a year, though, members of the committee are sure to be asking one another: Did we have 300 or 500 books? Was the opening at lunchtime or in the early evening? What did we spend on posters? How many people came to the opening party? And so on. So if there is any likelihood that other exhibitions will be held on future occasions, make sure to keep a careful record of exactly what happened on this occasion.

Attendance

Three things are specially worth noting. The first is the record of daily and weekly attendance. At some exhibitions precise figures are known because visitors on arrival or departure sign a book provided for the purpose. At others, the invigilators keep a rough check by writing an "X" or a tick on a piece of scrap paper every time a newcomer enters the exhibition area.

A Photographic Record

The second useful record is photographic. Photographs, both of those involved and of the design and layout, can be extremely useful for future reference. They need not cost much, since what is required are simple shots not fancy art photographs.

Special Points

The third is a short account of any points of special interest. The weather, for example, in some countries can have a great effect on attendance. Two years later one may be very puzzled by a three-day drop in the number of visitors unless someone has noted: "Tuesday to Thursday, heavy snow". On the other hand, the arrival of a local fair or carnival may have greatly increased attendance, but this will be forgotten in later years unless the fact is noted.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

TRAVELLING EXHIBITIONS

Planning Ahead

Sometimes it is possible to send an exhibition from one place to another, thus enabling many more people to see it. However, all the arrangements must be made well in advance; otherwise things are sure to go wrong. So if the exhibition is not being accompanied by one or more members of the original organising committee, try to ensure that all subsequent showings have their own committees and that each committee has sufficient information (e.g. a copy or photocopy of this book) to be able to follow the same procedures as yourself.

Packing Up

In such circumstances, the main task of the original organisers is to arrange the packing and transport of the books. Only very rarely is it feasible or worthwhile to pack the ancillary exhibits. The important point here is to supply a list of all the books being sent on. Usually this can be done by checking off the titles against the catalogue and noting any that are missing. Send one copy with the books themselves, another separately by post, and keep a copy yourself.

Though you may be able to use some of the original packing materials, you may find it best to find other containers for the exhibition. In some countries, laundry boxes have been found to be a good size for packing books in, and strong enough to resist the vagaries of all sorts of transport.

Touring the Exhibition

Where an exhibition is going to a number of places, money and trouble can be saved if each exhibitor sends the books directly to the next one without returning them to base. If this method is followed, it may be essential to send each place a brief list of instructions. This should include:

- (a) Details of how to pack the books.
- (b) A reminder to enclose a list with the books and to send a copy under separate cover.
- (c) A procedure for notifying the original promoter of any titles that have been lost or damaged during the showing.
- (d) Instructions to next exhibitor about onward forwarding after their show is over.

In addition, photographs of the original display sent under separate cover ahead of the books themselves can sometimes help the next exhibitor plan the layout and ancillary displays.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

BOOKSELLING

Reasons for Selling

Normally speaking, the difference between a book exhibition and a book fair is that the former aims to show what books are available and the latter additionally sells the books - or at least takes orders for them. Frankfurt has a book fair; so does Delhi; so does Singapore. It is true that these are huge events, but there can be a selling point at any book exhibition.

The main reason for having a selling point is not just to boost the income of the exhibition but to enable any visitor who sees an interesting book to buy it before his interest lapses. Even strong impulses are lost if people have to leave the exhibition and go in search of a bookshop in order to buy a book they have seen. So if you believe that it is important to catch the impulse of the moment, look into the possibility of selling books on the spot.

A Bookshop at the Exhibition

This can be organised in a number of different ways. The exhibition committee can set up a stall to sell quantities of the books on display (and maybe even the display books themselves on the last afternoon). This will require getting stock, preferably on sale or return, from publishers or a wholesaler or a bookseller. In the first two cases the chances are that the exhibition will get the same discount as is granted to the retail trade. This in turn means that a successful exhibition bookshop

can be quite an income earner. But if a bookseller supplies the stock, he will be able to allow the organisers only a portion of the discount he has himself received from publishers. This is unlikely to exceed 10%.

Watching the Cash

Whenever possible some form of cash register should be used when selling. If you are unable to borrow one, a metal cash box will do, though this is more vulnerable to raid and theft. A record should also be kept of sales made. The simplest way is to use A4 sheets divided into two columns, one for the title of every book sold and the other for the money received. Totalling up the latter at the end of each day should give a sum of money exactly equal to the cash in hand.

For the cash register or box, a "float" will be needed each day so that change can be given to the first buyers. A system will also have to be worked out so that if, during the day, there is a change of sales persons, a check can be made so as to make sure that the right amount of cash is handed over from one person to the other.

A Bookseller at the Exhibition

An alternative to obtaining the books from a bookseller is to get the bookseller to set up and run the selling point himself. The exhibition committee allocates him the space for a stall free of charge, preferably in a prominent place near the exit door, leaving him to provide stock, staff and know-how. In such cases the bookseller generally allows the exhibition a percentage of his profit - possibly as much as 50% of it. The great advantage to the exhibition organisers is that they do not have to worry about stocking the stall or looking after it. The bookseller can bring in extra stock daily as it is needed. Moreover he takes the whole risk. This being so, he is only likely to agree to running the staff if he foresees a substantial volume of trade. Here records of past experience can be useful.

APPENDIX A :

TWO EXAMPLES OF PAGES FROM ANNOTATED CATALOGUES

112 Kemp, Gene *DOG DAYS AND CAT NAPS*; illustrated by Carolyn Dinan *Faber*, £4.75. This is a collection of stories with different narrators, set firmly among the ordinary events of home and school. Animals, as the title suggests, figure in most of the stories but it is the humans who are important. A wide range of emotions from humour to pathos is covered, and the stories are well told. Gene Kemp's inimitable, unforced, flippant, but always apt style is exactly right.

113 Kilner, Geoffrey *KINGFISHER Dobson*, £3.95. The story opens with a convincing description of George Green and form 3C not paying attention to a lesson based on the Grail legend. Good though this is, one soon realises that the book is not just another competent story of disadvantaged children. Through his interest in the local football team, The Kingfishers, and because of his unconfessed dislike of violence and gang warfare, George meets a mysterious Mr. Fisher. Mr. Fisher wants the river Lance cleaned up and George undertakes a report on its polluted state for a school project. The character of George is discerningly described and the language is totally convincing. We sympathise with him as he discovers, "something we can do better than just smashing things." The Arthurian parallels of quest and good struggling against evil add an extra dimension for those who can see them.

114 Lamplugh, Lois *THE WINTER DONKEY Deutsch*, £3.95. This beguiling story is convincingly set in Cornwall, and describes a year in the life of ten year old Matthew. Gloomily certain that his older brother Stephen (at the grammar) is allowed to get away with anything, and that his younger sister Caroline is spoilt by everyone, he comes across as a likeable, reliable character. He is fond of his grandparents who live nearby, and is pleased when his grandfather comes on the Sunday School outing. To the family's astonished joy, grandfather decides to winter one of the seaside donkeys. Goldie becomes a member of the family, and plays a part in the life of the village. Just before Easter when she is due to return to her beach work, she produces a foal. When the book ends, Matthew has grown up considerably, feels differently

- 437 McDonald, Ian. THE HUMMING-BIRD TREE *Heinemann Educational (Caribbean Writers)* 1974, paper £0.55. 182pp. SBN 435 98575 2 (Trinidad).
The cassia tree has yellow blossoms which are visited by the glittering Trinidadian humming birds. It is a symbol of beauty and provides the setting for a white Creole boy and an East kitchen girl whose love is predestined to fail.
- 438 Mittelholzer, Edgar. A MORNING AT THE OFFICE *Heinemann Educational (Caribbean Writers)* 1974, paper £0.80. 247pp. SBN 435 98593 9 (Guyana).
Tells the story of what happened in a Trinidadian office one morning between 'four minutes to seven and lunchtime.'
- 439 Mittelholzer, Edgar. CORENTYNE THUNDER *Heinemann Educational (Caribbean Writers)* 1970, paper £1.00. 229pp. SBN 435 98593 0 (Guyana).
In 1941, the first novel published that explored Guyanese peasant life.
- 440 Morris, Mervyn. ON HOLY WEEK *Sangster's Book Stores* 1976, paper \$1.00. 32pp. illus. by Lorna Goodison (Jamaica).
Poems about the people involved when Jesus was crucified.
- 441 Munro, Ian and Sander, Reinhard eds. KAS-KAS *Afro and Afro-American Research Institute* 1972, paper Free, 56pp. Occasional publication.
Interviews with George Lamming, C. L. R. James and Wilson Harris.
- 442 Naipaul, Shiva. THE CHIP-CHIP GATHERERS *Deutsch* 1973 £3.50. 320pp. SBN 233 96380 4 (Trinidad).
Egbert Ramsaran moved from the Settlement and became rich, but the connecting threads remained and became a cage in which his son Wilbert grew up.
- 443 Naipaul, V. S. A HOUSE FOR MR BISWAS *Deutsch (The Russell Edition)* 1961 £4.95. 531pp. SBN 253 95589 5 (Trinidad).
The author conveys a sense of time passing in which generations grow and die while Mohun, in his ramshackle and cherished house, becomes the seeker who has at last found his way.
- 444 Naipaul, V. S. GUERILLAS *Deutsch* 1975, £3.25. 253pp. SBN 233 96702 8 (Trinidad).
The island is approaching crisis and James Ahmed says: "When everybody wants to fight there's nothing to fight for. Everybody wants to fight his own little war, everybody is a guerilla."
- 445 Naipaul, V. S. MIGUEL STREET *Heinemann Educational (Caribbean Writers)* 1974, paper £0.85. 222pp. SBN 435 98645 7 (Trinidad).
Set of Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, The author deals with the people who live on Miguel Street.
- 446 Naipaul, V.S. THE MYSTIC MASSEUR *Heinemann Educational (Caribbean Writers)* 1971, paper £0.50. 214pp. SBN 435 98646 5 (Trinidad).
A satirical novel which describes in West Indian dialect the transition of Ganesh from masseur to mystic and finally to colonial statesman.
- 447 Naipaul, V. S. THE SUFFRAGE OF ELVIRA *Penguin* 1969, paper £0.85. 207pp. SBN 14 00.2938 9 (Trinidad).
A miniature of the West Indian political scene. A new democracy is having its second general election.
- 448 Osbourne, Ivor. THE MERCENARY *Rex Collings* 1977 £4.50. 136pp. SBN 860 36 021 0 (Jamaica).
A Jamaican writer examines the mind of a mercenary.

APPENDIX B

PART OF A STENCILLED LIST

PICTURE BOOKS OF TRADITIONAL TALES

Paul Galdone: THE THREE PIGS (World's Work)
Gail Haley: A STORY, A STORY (Methuen/Magnet)
Helen Oxenbury: THE GREAT BIG ENORMOUS TURNIP
(Heinemann/Piccolo)

COLLECTIONS PUBLISHED ESPECIALLY
FOR READING-ALoud SESSIONS

Eileen Colwell: TIME FOR A STORY, TELL ME A
STORY, TELL ME ANOTHER STORY (all Puffin)
Sara and Stephen Corrin: STORIES FOR FIVE-YEAR-
OLDS, . . . SIX-YEAR-OLDS, . . . SEVEN-YEAR-
OLDS, . . . EIGHT-YEAR-OLDS (Faber/Puffin)
Norah Montgomerie: TO READ AND TO TELL (Bodley
Head)

COLLECTIONS OF TRADITIONAL TALES
FOLK TALES & FAIRY STORIES

Anne Rockwell: THE THREE BEARS AND OTHER STORIES
(Hamish Hamilton)
Virginia Haviland and Raymond Briggs: THE FAIRY
TALE TREASURY (Hamish Hamilton/Puffin)
Wanda Gag: TALES FROM GRIM (Faber)
Iona and Peter Opie: THE CLASSIC FAIRY TALES
(Oxford University Press/Paladin)
Amabel Williams-Ellis: THE STORY SPIRITS AND
OTHER TALES FROM AROUND THE WORLD (Heinemann)

APPENDIX C

PART OF AN UNANNOTATED LIST

Note that this example gives the International Standard Book Number (ISBN) of each publication. Some publishers now insist that ISBN numbers should be quoted on the orders they receive.

CHAPMAN & HALL MATHEMATICS SERIES.

Algebraic number theory.

By I. Stewart and D. Tall. 1979.

0 412 13840 9

Independence theory in combinatorics:
an introductory account with applications
to graphs and transversals.

By V. Bryant and H. Perfect. 1980.

0 412 22430 5

Mathematical programming and control
theory. By B.D. Craven. 1978.

0 412 15500 1

Chapman & Hall £5.50 each

CHATFIELD, C. The analysis of time
series: an introduction. 2nd ed. 1980.

Chapman & Hall £6.50 0 412 22460 7

CLARKE, C. Elementary general
relativity. 1979. Edward Arnold

£5.95 0 7131 2763 5

CLARKE, G.M. & COOKE, D. A basic
course in statistics. 1978, reprinted

1980. Edward Arnold £6.95

0 7131 2672 8

COLLINSON, C.D. Introductory
mechanics. 1980. Edward Arnold

£7.95 0 7131 2786 4

CUTLAND, N. Computability:
an introduction to recursive function
theory. 1980. Cambridge U.P. £6.75

0 521 29465 7

APPENDIX D

A SPECIMEN LETTER

A Brown Esq
Sales Director
Brown & Brown Publishers
1 Independence Avenue

Dear Mr Brown

I am sure that you will be pleased to hear that we are planning to put on a Book Exhibition designed to interest more people in children's books.

This exhibition will take place at the Central Library, Market Street, from January 3rd to January 17th 1983. It will be opened by the High Commissioner at 6 p.m. on January 2nd in the presence of many important people including a large number of head teachers and school librarians.

We are anxious to ensure that your Company's books, which have an excellent reputation in the children's field, are well represented. Could you, please, in the first instance let us have your latest catalogue together with a list of forthcoming books up to January 1983. Our selection committee, chaired by the Chief Children's Librarian of the Central Library, will then make a selection from these, a list of which should reach you at least three months before the exhibition.

Some publishers consider this exhibition so important an event for the exposure of their books to an audience expected over a two-week period to exceed 2,500 people, including teachers, school parties and the like, that they are donating the books without charge. We hope

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- 2 -

that you will be able to do this, too. If not, then the books should be charged to:

Exhibition Organiser
Books for Children
c/o The Central Library
Market Street,

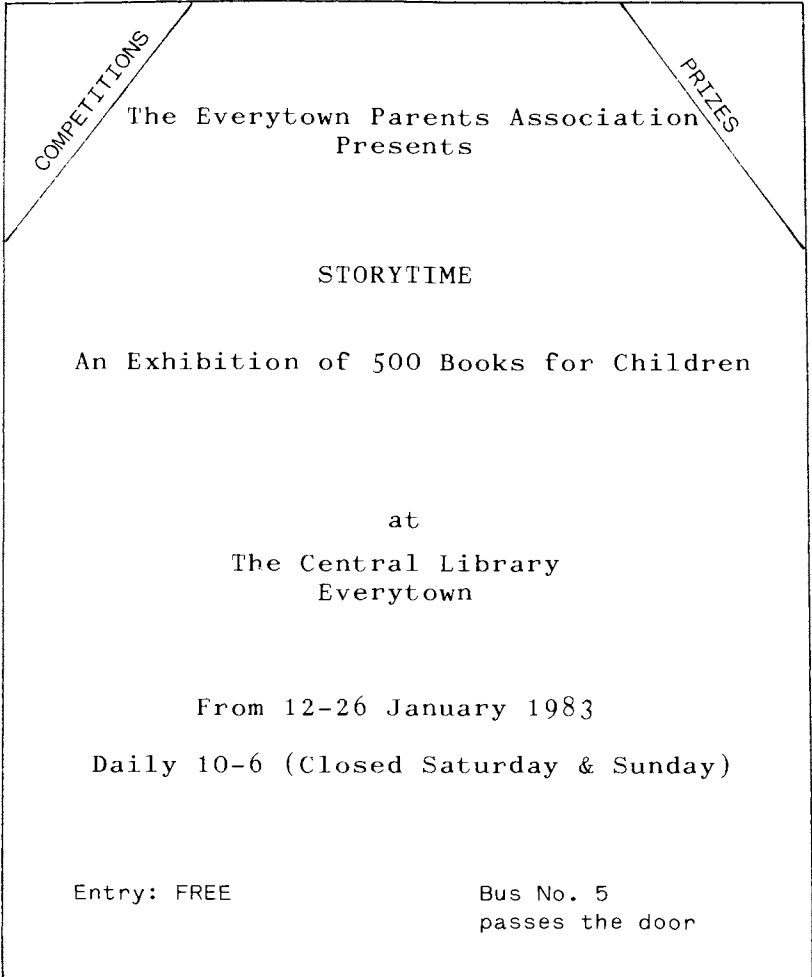
the invoice being sent under separate cover while a delivery note is sent with the books themselves. Parcels, whether charged or not, should arrive no later than December 20th but not before December 10th 1982.

You yourself will of course be invited to the opening.

Yours sincerely

APPENDIX E

A SPECIMEN POSTER



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May be purchased from
Commonwealth Secretariat Publications
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London SW1Y 5HX

ISBN 0 85092 209 7

