**A Victorian Christmas at Bangor University Library**

**1 December 2012**

**Collaborative Event Delivered by:**

**Bangor University Library and Archives Service,**

**Gwynedd Library Services and Penrhyn Castle National Trust**

**Event and Target Audiences:**

Bangor University Library and Archives Service, Gwynedd Library Services and Penrhyn Castle collaborated to host a Victorian Christmas in Bangor University’s Main Library. The event was aimed towards local children and community. Children from several different primary schools across Gwynedd and Anglesey attended the event and headcounts were upwards of 180 people all day, with over 200 people present at the busiest period.

**Objectives:**

* To raise awareness of the University library, Gwynedd library services and Penrhyn Castle.
* To engage the local community and children.
* To open access to people who might not usually visit the University.
* To fulfil strategic aims of Libraries Inspire.

**Summary of the Event:**

* The event took place in the festively festooned Main Library foyer, Shankland Reading Room (Welsh library), and Social Learning Space. Library staff and volunteers from Penrhyn Castle dressed as wealthy gentry or servants. Various activities took place throughout the day in the designated spaces. Activities held at the event:
* Penrhyn Castle supplied Victorian costumes for the visiting children (who donned flat caps and waistcoats, or bonnets and aprons) and a range of old fashioned Victorian toys for the children to play with;
* Treasure hunt.
* Making Christmas decorations.
* Story-telling throughout the day in both Welsh and English.
* A stall selling roasted chestnuts.
* Local choir, Dros y Bont, singing Welsh Christmas carols.
* Gwynedd library staff also supplied a number of Christmas related children’s books in Welsh and English for the reader’s corner, which was populated all day.
* Visitors were free to explore the library and peruse ‘From X to @’, the exhibition tracing the development of libraries and education through the ages. Refreshments, mince pies, biscuits and other chocolaty delights were provided free of charge for all visitors.

**Promotion:**

* Posters and flyers (designed in house).
* Gwynedd library staff visited local primary schools to advertise the event directly.
* Discussion and promotion of event on Radio Cymru.

**Partners:**

* Bangor University Library and Archives Service.
* Gwynedd Library Services.
* Penrhyn Castle, National Trust.
* Student volunteers.
* Palas Print.

**Use of Resources:**

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| * Art and crafts material. * Christmas trees. * Refreshments and mince pies. * Poster printing | £187.22  £ 94.98  £ 84.06  £347.00 |
| **Total:** | **£713.26** |

**Promotion of Library Services:**

* Promotional materials advertising services and forthcoming events within Bangor University Library and Archives Services, Gwynedd and Penrhyn Castle were distributed to attendees.
* Member of library staff actively promoting free ILL within Wales, LINC y Gogledd, personal membership at Bangor University, and librarywales.org.

**Feedback:**

* Staff spoke to visitors at the event to identify suggestions and areas for improvement. The event was extremely well-received by all the attendees and feedback on the day was very positive from everybody. The children were engaged, eager to participate and appeared to have fun. Adults were delighted that the doors to the library were open to the community and both, happy and surprised to find it was free to join and borrow books. All the visitors that were asked said they would attend any future events.
* The event was also popular with the local press (see Y Goriad article attached).

**Future Development:**

* The Victorian Christmas event will be held again in December 2013.
* Due to success of the Victorian Christmas event, Bangor University and Gwynedd Library Services are holding 2 gothic horror reading events with Daniel Morden in February. There are two target age groups, 11-16 and 18+. The reading events will be hosted by gothic library staff and take place at night in an appropriately decorated Shankland Reading Room. Visitors should also prepare themselves for a few things that go bump in the night!
* 2 reading events to be held in June over 2 days, a ghost tour in Penrhyn Castle and a Harry Potter reading in Bangor University Main Library. Hold further themed events in the future e.g. Mabinogion, Harry Potter, Renaissance/Shakespeare, crime/gangster, sci-fi, medieval, Twm Siôn Cati (the Welsh highwayman).
* People asked if there were donation boxes as they were happy to give some money towards the event. Donation boxes will be provided for any future events to recuperate some cost and potentially make a profit that can then be allocated towards funding Welsh celebrities to read for any future events Gwynedd, Penrhyn Castle and Bangor University libraries wish to host.
* Supply bags containing a pencil and marketing material for all library events and services available to the public.