

TEEN LIBRARIAN

Monthly

Teen Librarian

Monthly Newsletter
www.teenlibrarian.co.uk



TEEN LIBRARIAN

Monthly

5th

anniversary

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Editorial

Welcome the 5th anniversary edition of Teen Librarian Monthly! This month although primarily the library protest edition will also take a quick look back to the beginning of TLM and have a look at the Somerset Fiction Award for 2011

Phil Bradley has very kindly given me permission to reprint his blog post on creating library posters. My dear friend Colette Townend has provided an article on creating 'Zines, I have reprinted my Protest Signs 101 article from January. We also take a look at the art of wheat-pasting, stencil graffiti and on the vaguest of chances you have not yet heard of the two largest pro-Library campaigns in the UK – Voices for the Library and the Fight for Libraries Campaign run by the Bookseller magazine I have included information on what they are doing and how to get hold of them.

The Eight Questions with.. this month is with YA author Christine Norris.

Five Years of Teen Librarian

When I first launched Teen Librarian in May 2006 it was a two page affair released as a Word Document with 12 subscribers. I soon learned how to save it as a PDF and the page count has increased but still has no fixed length. In all honesty I had no idea that it would last five years.

The Teen Librarian website has also changed; from being hosted on the Brave host free site provider as: <http://teenlibraryserviceuk.bravehost.com> to it's current incarnation as <http://www.teenlibrarian.co.uk>

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed articles and ideas over the years and also to everyone who subscribes. Teen Librarian was and still is a labour of love for me, the development of Teen and YA library services is an important goal for me and it is heartening to know that there are so many others that share a similar goal. The original goal of Teen Librarian Monthly was to provide a free monthly newsletter on the state of Teen Library services in the UK (and abroad) as well as to share ideas for library events and to share examples of best practice, I am aware that issues have been a bit sporadic of late and for that I do apologise but the end goal has not changed. I would like again to ask everyone that is running Teen Reading and Activity groups of any kind to share your experiences and ideas – you do not have to write a whole essay, a few lines about what you are doing and where will be fine.

Thank you for reading and I hope you stick around to see where Teen Services go next!

Somerset Fiction Award 2011 Winners Announced

Karen Horsfield



The winners of The Somerset Fiction Award – ‘A book to make you laugh’, were recently announced during a celebration held at Sedgemoor Manor Junior School. Storyteller Alec Williams revealed the winning titles to an excited audience of staff and children and then promoted the joy and fun that can be inspired through books, poetry and reading.

Since the short-list was announced last autumn schools across Somerset have been busy reading in preparation for the 2011 award. Voting took place during March.

This year’s favourite titles were:

Age 4 – 7 Category - **Little Rabbit Foo Foo by Michael Rosen**

Michael Rosen wrote 'Thank you to everyone who has voted for Little Rabbit Foo Foo, it's a real honour to be selected and I'm delighted to be a part of the Somerset Fiction Award. I'm pleasantly surprised to have won having seen the other fantastic titles short-listed in the same category! I think what makes this award so special is that it's chosen by you the readers! I hope you have a fantastic afternoon and continue to enjoy reading – it's the biggest adventure you will ever go on!'

Age 7 – 9 Category - **The Twits by Roald Dahl**

Age 9 – 11 Category - **Diary of a wimpy kid by Jeff Kinney**

Puffin Books (on behalf of Jeff Kinney) said 'Jeff will be absolutely thrilled to receive this award for Diary of a Wimpy Kid. He is so chuffed that UK kids have responded so warmly to the books. We hope they all enjoy the second film Rodrick Rules when it hits UK cinemas on 27th May!'

Teenage 11+ Category - **Skulduggery Pleasant Book 1 by Derek Landy**

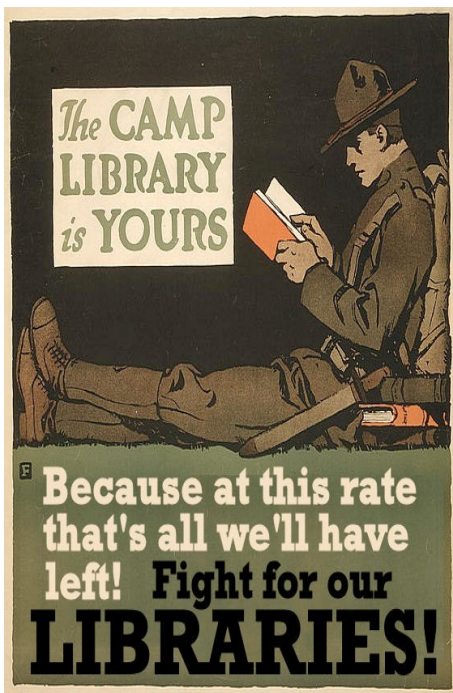
Derek Landy sent this message 'It's always a great thrill to win anything, but for something like the Somerset Fiction Award the thrill is even greater. It's such a fantastic enterprise, and the fact that the books are first nominated, and then voted on, by readers makes it even more special. it is both an honour and a privilege to win and now, if you'll excuse me, I really must get back to writing the next one...'

Library Posters

Phil Bradley

If you [follow me on Twitter](#), Facebook or Flickr you'll have seen that I've been busy recently doing some work with posters for the #Savelibraries campaign. I love looking through old posters, advertisements, bill stickers and so on, and I got to thinking, I wonder what the Savelibraries campaign would look like through the medium of some of those old posters? I started with the obvious idea of 'Your library needs you', but as I started to go through the posters in detail I could see that - without a great deal of work, we could have some fun here.

I started by looking at the message of these First and Second World War posters. The propaganda messages are actually really interesting; the WW1 posters do however tend towards individual responsibility and shaming people - as in the 'Daddy, what did you do in the Great War?' sentiment. WW2 posters on the other hand tend to emphasize the strength and power of doing things together - the Battle of Britain poster with all the pilots together is a good example of that. However, in both cases what was similar was a very basic statement with a call for action of some sort. Indignation and direct demands were commonplace, and an emphasis on the differing roles of men and women were also common to see.



Having got a clear idea of the type of message that worked with the posters I obviously wanted them to look as realistic as possible. A major problem here is that the fonts used are very specific, and you just don't find them in modern default collections. I did some hunting around and did find some but each font was costing upwards of £25 each, so that just wasn't happening. Sometimes I left the font as it was and used a similar default font, or I removed the lot and started over.

I tended to use Paintshop Pro and Photoshop for the actual work. What I did depended on the image. With some posters I just removed the text and replaced it with my own. I'd use the ink dropper to make sure that the shade was the same. Sometimes I had to do a lot more work, with layers and scripts to get the right feel but overall I'm happy with the results that I got.

People have understandably asked about copyright. I should start by saying that 'I am not a lawyer'. Copyright law is a horrible area, but these images fall into basically one of three categories, at least as far as my understanding goes (and I've been looking into this a lot since I started to think about producing the posters!) The general UK copyright law is the life of the artist +70 years. Consequently, the first thing to do is to try and find the actual artist - in some cases this wasn't available, and despite trying to find the artists I haven't always been able to. However, if we go back to 1941 it's reasonable to suppose that any artist working the period of WW1 will have died by then.

We also need to take into account the fact that when someone was engaged to produce posters, they would not necessarily own the copyright - it would be owned by the appropriate department (many of which do not exist now of course), or more generically by the Government of the country concerned. Media files of this type are in the public domain in the United States, and this applies to US works where the copyright has expired, often because the first publication was prior to January 1st 1923. Many of the WW2 posters that were produced are also in the public domain since they're Government produced and published between 1923 and 1977, inclusive and without a copyright notice. Some works are also in the public domain in the United States because it is a work of the United States Federal Government under the terms of Title 17, Chapter 1, Section 105 of the US Code.

A lot of the artistic works from the UK (including posters of this nature) are in the public domain because of one of the following:

1. It is a photograph created by the United Kingdom Government and taken prior to 1 June 1957; or
2. It was commercially published prior to 1961; or
3. It is an artistic work other than a photograph or engraving (e.g. a painting) which was created by the United Kingdom Government prior to 1961.

(Just to confuse matters further, as there isn't one global law on Copyright, an item may or may not be in the public domain depending on the country in question.)

The third category is the anonymous category - when an item has been produced and it's not possible to ascertain ownership, or the name of the artist, or the commissioning body or the date of . This is particularly the case with a lot of images of this type, which were either produced a long while ago, or which were produced in a country that was subsequently overrun during the war and all records were lost. At this point all that you can do is take a best guess.

So - I've tried to ensure that with every single poster in the collection that it's in the public domain, and as such it's fine for me to use. Of course - if anyone does have a copyright claim I'll happily remove any poster. I'm making absolutely no claim on them myself, other than having the idea, and if other people want to have a go, I'm certainly not going to suggest that they shouldn't - the more the merrier!

I should also point out that it's not me who produced the '[Use Libraries and learn stuff](#)' along the lines of the Keep Calm and Carry On poster. I've linked to the Flickr account for that particular image in case you'd like to take a look at it.

If you wish to buy copies of the original un-savelibraries versions there are many poster companies on the internet who will sell them to you.

Above all, I hope that you enjoy the posters - I am indebted to the original artists (whoever they are in some cases!), who I like to think would be pleased that their work has got a new lease of life in protecting libraries.

http://philbradley.typepad.com/phil_bradleys_weblog/2011/02/library-posters-a-set-on-flickr.html



voices for the library

Voices for the Library is a place for everyone who loves libraries to share their stories and experiences of the value of public libraries.

We don't want to lose our libraries, and we aim to ensure future generations continue to enjoy access to free unbiased public libraries and librarians.

Librarians and library users raise their Voices For Libraries

A group of dedicated librarians and information professionals have set up Voices for the Library, a campaigning website to share positive stories from public libraries and librarians, provide factual information about library usage in the UK and draw together the fragmented responses to the many attacks on UK public library services. It is high time for library professionals to be the voices for libraries. This campaign is an opportunity for people to discuss why libraries and librarians are so important, and why it is vital that they are run well and serve their communities effectively.

Libraries have recently had a high profile in the media, as a result of the threat of drastic cuts to library services across the UK. It is surprising that the majority of people speaking in the media about the future of libraries are not library users or library professionals and do not have the necessary knowledge and understanding of what libraries are for and the value they have. This site provides spokespeople for the media with a range of professional expertise.

We are looking for contributions from the public who use libraries, the libraries themselves, librarians, and other library staff. We want them to give us their stories about what libraries and the excellent staff working in libraries have done for them. We are also looking for contributions of statistics and data that accurately demonstrate the impact and use of public library services.

Only through these stories and with this information can the real voices of libraries be heard. These are the voices of the people who use and love libraries, and the voices of the profession who serve UK citizens by providing public library services: local gateways to knowledge, providing a basic condition for lifelong learning, independent decision-making and cultural development of individuals and social groups.

Voices for the Library are not willing to allow cuts to libraries to slip by without public outcry. This is an opportunity for people who know how important libraries are to make their voices heard.

Information about Voices for the Library:

The campaign was set up in August 2010 with the following aims:

1. Share positive stories from public libraries and librarians.
2. Provide factual information about library usage in the UK.
3. Provide spokespeople for the media with a range of professional expertise.

Contact Details:

media@voicesforthelibrary.org.uk

<http://www.voicesforthelibrary.org.uk/>

<http://twitter.com/UKpling>

Zines, Zines and Fanzines

Colette Townend

How to make a zine

The best thing about zines is that they're personal experiments in self publishing – when I first made a zine I don't think I had even seen one, I just made a mock up – sticking typed up writing, pictures, patterned paper handwriting all together on a page. You get the hang of what photocopies best from just trying it out. Its good to start thinking small, you don't need to think you need to have tonnes of pages, or send it to a printers. Just make a few pages and go find a photocopier. A good rate is 5p per copy (public and university libraries, Staples and lots of newsagents charge this much) so that you can break even selling your zine. Obviously even better is being able to scam free photocopying from your evil workplace or if you are doing a substantial run send it to a printer (such as Footprint workers co-op in Leeds who I would recommend as they really care about zines are a super cool ethical business). Once you've made your zine you can give it to your friends, trade with other zinesters, sell/trade with distros and send to other zines so they can review yours!

New zines to check out

Athemauro: The Library Issue – A really cool zine by a library worker about public service cuts and library closures. There's also writing on early memories of visiting the library, finding new books and music. Sample quote: "Disillusioned with the crass competitiveness and inhumane, cold world of ladder-climbing careerists and the general grim life of office work, I knew the calmer, quieter library life was for me". The author has a blog here - <http://savelibraryjobs.blogspot.com/>

Crime Scenes (No Fate But What We Make #4) – By Pete this is super awesome recent zine with loads of writing and drawing on different things such as a guide to Peckham, a "show review" of Slavoj Zizek speaking at the Royal Festival Hall, a really funny point by point "guide to zines for illustration students", a thorough look at Guatemalan Hardcore and even a drawing of anarchists smashing a shop window. Cool! Get it from his own dead trees and dye distro (which he takes to loads of zine fairs and can be found online at www.deadtreesanddye.com)

SCUMBAG – I got this zine at a club-night of the same name, there's an awesome true list "Lessons I learned the hard way about living in London", anecdotes from a library worker, the best line "Some scummy tory (well, probably) wanker was coming in to be the new head of libraries and he was going to show he was a doer by 'shaking things up'". Also zine veteran Charlotte Cooper has contributed a pie chart of survival! I got this at the club night so I don't know if you could pick it up anywhere – try queerscumbag@gmail.com

Where to get zines

The best place ever to get zines has always been the LONDON ZINE SYMPOSIUM. It is totally amazing to see 60+ stalls of self published photocopied and crafted zines and comics. There are other special zine fairs always popping up around the country in Birmingham, Leeds, Manchester, Edinburgh, Brighton and even more broader self publishing at artist books and comix conventions.

In London there is a Zine Fest coming up at The Women's Library on Saturday 25th June! Find more information at organiser Red's blog - <http://feministmemory.wordpress.com/>

You can also track down the zinesters themselves, but a lot lot easier to find catalogues of zine distros, often online! Marching Stars, Dead Trees & Dye, Cherry Bomb Comics, Dear Soeurs are all great, I run a distro with my house-mate called Ricochet Ricochet too! <http://www.myspace.com/ricochetricochet>

Places to visit!

56a Infoshop, Crampton Street (Elephant & Castle/Walworth Road area of London) – A wonderful radical anarchist bookshop which sells zines and has a massive zine library that you can browse at leisure (I spent ages sorting it out, barely seemed to make a dent in it though!).

London College of Communication, The British Library, The V&A, The Women's Library amongst others have special zine collections that are also worth checking out.

Protest Sign Making 101

This can also be used as a practical workshop for young people who feel they may want to protest.



It is also good for Friends of Library Groups that may wish to protest branch closures on a Local Authority level.

Materials

- Poster boards (A3)
- Ruler
- Marker pens / Paint
- Stencils
- Pencils
- Handles
- Stapler
- Glue
- Duct tape

Select a thick board that won't easily bend or tear in strong winds. Also, select a board that's white – or, if choosing coloured board, make sure it is a light colour that won't distract from the message.

Writing the message

- You will need a pencil, a ruler and a thick black marker for this part, especially if you don't have stencils.
- Using the ruler, measure the board and letter size – you do not want to start and then run out of space.
- Using the pencil, lightly trace out the letters of the slogan, make them as large as you can (so that the slogan is legible from a distance)
- Once you have a design you're satisfied with, use your marker to outline the letters.
- If there is a particular word you want to emphasise, consider adding colour. Red will make it stand out and look dramatic, but outline the word in black so it's readable.

Constructing your sign

Use glue to attach the sign to the handle and then use a staple gun for additional strength, for the paranoid you can use tape to make sure the sign will stay attached to the handle. If you use wood for the handle it may be advisable to wrap the end you hold in take so you do not get splinters.

Hold your poster up with both hands where people can see it. It is, of course, make sure it is right side up! Alternatively you can attach a handle to your sign.

Slogans

These should be clear, concise, and readable – remember that people will only have a few seconds to read your message, by all means have some leaflets to hand out as well detailing your views. Humorous slogans can work well, as do images.

For example:

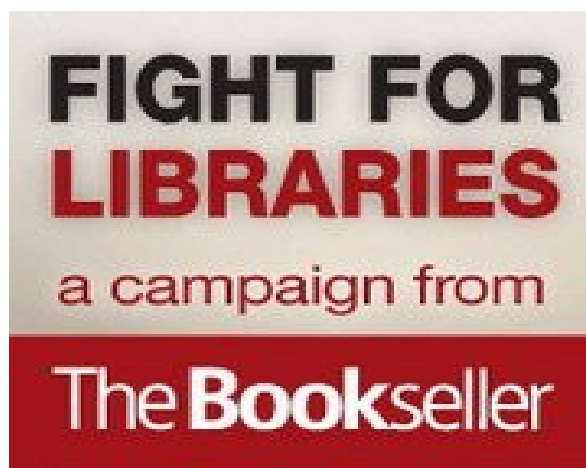
We will not be shhhhhh'ed!

Close Tax Loopholes Not Libraries!

Stencilling

- Come up with a design – it is best to do this once you have measured the board as you may end up with letters that are too large or small for the size of the board.
- It is important to remember that you cannot have 'islands' such as the middle of an O or R. You can use straight lines to connect the islands.
- Transfer your designs to a piece of cardboard (cereal boxes can be used to make stencils). You can also draw out your designs on paper and then photocopy them on to thinner pieces of board.
- Use a **sharp** craft knife to cut out the design. Blunt blades can rip the board wasting your work.
- Spray-paint works best with cardboard stencils, you can also use acrylic paint and dab it through the stencil using a sponge or brush.
- Remember to wipe excess paint off the stencil as this will help it to last longer.

Stencilling can also be used for graffiti, urban artist Banksy is well-known for his stencil images. Stencils can help artists and protesters work faster than trying to create freestyle graffiti message. Graffiti workshops have been growing in popularity over the past few years with a number of library services running urban art workshops in their libraries. Working with urban artists it could be possible to redecorate the teen area of the library with stencil designs created by the young people themselves.



The Bookseller's campaign aims to provide a focal point for campaigners, librarians and the book trade to Fight For Libraries. You can also follow on Twitter [@fight4libraries](https://twitter.com/fight4libraries)

Manifesto

We are fighting for public libraries because they form an essential seed-bed for the wider reading culture of the nation, a culture from which the whole of society benefits.

Libraries seed communities with books and ideas in a way which is irreplaceable. They provide books to people who wouldn't otherwise see or afford them, the youngest in society, the oldest, and people on low incomes. They also provide free internet access to the 27% of the population who still aren't online at home.

Libraries are also a forum where authors and readers can come together in a neutral, unbiased space - free from commercial pressures.

Most importantly they are curated by professional librarians who provide expert guidance for readers, helping people find the books and information they need, again free from commercial considerations.

Readers, reading and the values imparted are essential to any civilised society – indeed it seems impossible to conceive a civilisation without libraries.

We oppose the arbitrary, disproportionate and wantonly destructive nature of the cuts to the national library service now under way, and we will do everything we can to mobilise the entire book world in libraries' defence.

Demands

1. We support both the letter and the spirit of the 1964 Public Libraries Act, which stipulates that local authorities have a duty to maintain a comprehensive and efficient library service for all their residents.
2. We support library users in all their various campaigns to defend local libraries, including the call for a national public enquiry into the library service by Steve Ross.
3. We maintain that libraries should not be singled out for cuts disproportionate to the budget cuts being made in their local authority. Indeed, given their special importance to users at times of economic difficulty, they deserve protection.
4. When savings have to be made, we want to see council chiefs look at their own senior salaries and back office costs before cutting professional librarian posts or closing libraries.
5. We want to see decisive leadership from the Government to support, preserve and improve library services – and a clear strategy to achieve that.

Wheat-pasting

Once you have made some amazing posters or other pieces of two-dimensional art you may want to stick it somewhere, say on a nice smooth wall near oh possibly a council office or maybe even in the teen area of a library if you are running a poster design workshop and have permission to redecorate the teen space.

You can make wheat-paste by mixing one cup of flour to one and ½ cups of water, stir well to remove any lumps then bring to the boil until the mixture thickens, it usually takes about 30 minutes until it turns into a thick, clear gloop. You can add more water if needed to improve the consistency. Smear the paste onto the surface you are using and also onto the back of the poster using a brush or putty knife, be sure that the entire poster is stuck down (this makes it harder to remove). You can also paint the paste over the poster to preserve it from the elements if it is outdoors.

For some brilliant examples of wheat pasted urban art have a look at artist Pivo's website: <http://andsomeplyers.blogspot.com/> if you live in East London you may be lucky enough to see some of Pivo's art.

Wheat-paste is also used to make papier-mâché.

Sticking posters can be illegal so make sure that you have permission to put anything up – or make sure that you do it very carefully (and quickly)*.

* Teen Librarian in no way advocates criminal or antisocial behaviour but does admire art in its many forms

Eight Questions with... Christine Norris

Q1 What influenced your decision to write for Teenagers?

I don't know that it was a conscious decision. I started to write seriously after I read the first four *Harry Potter* books. It wasn't even the stories that inspired me, though that was a big part of it, but it was JK Rowling's story of being a mother on the dole, writing by hand in a café. Just an ordinary person. And I thought, if she can do it, why can't I? The idea of writing for adults never really crossed my mind, probably because I loved the stories for teens. Some adult novels just try too hard, take themselves much too seriously, and I wanted to have fun without having to apologize for it :).

And really, when I was growing up, my favourite books were all fantasy novels - like Madeline L'Engle's *A Wrinkle in Time* and Roald Dahl's *The Witches*. I wore the covers off of my copies.

Q2 How do you get into the heads of your characters?

In some way they're all me, so it's not as difficult as it seems. But once in awhile I have to really reach inside there and poke around to figure out WHY this character is the way they are. Speculative fiction is always tagged as the "What If" genre. The first question I have to ask right after 'what if?' is 'why?'. Sometimes it entails having a conversation with the character about what he's feeling (yes, I talk to myself), or just taking some time to understand how the situation is affecting them. And sometimes things just play out like a movie in my head, and I just write it all down and try to keep up.

Q3 Do you know instinctively what will appeal to Teens or is it more a hit or miss process?

Again, I'm not aware that it's anything conscious. I just think things up and then decide if it will make a good story. Really, that's the most important thing - the story itself. A good and well-told story will always find some appeal. I mean, the main thing is not to make a topic too 'adult'. Teen books are about teens, first and foremost, and everything else is just details.

Q4 What is the most satisfying part of the writing process for you?

Next to being finished??? LOL. Honestly, and this is the truth, cross my heart - I like rewriting. Getting that first draft out is SO HARD sometimes. But once all the pieces are in place, I love to see how I can make it better. I can dive right in there and root around, and usually I'm thrilled to see how it all comes together. I really like doing revisions.

Q5 Do you ever read the works of other Teen/YA authors? If yes what can you recommend?

ALL THE TIME. I often say that I no longer read grown-up books, and really I don't because there's just no time, and not too many adult books actually appeal to me. I love everything Rick Riordan writes (there's a surprise, right?) and Tamora Pierce is fantastic, as is Libba Bray. And the kid-lit/YA-lit world is so tiny that many of my favourite authors are now my friends! Some of my current favourites are Lisa Mantchev's *Theatre Illuminata* series, and James A. Owen's *Imaginarium Geographica* series. They are

probably my current absolute favourites now, especially because I love time travel, literature mash-ups, and the Inklings. Oh, and if you get the chance to read Elizabeth Bunce's work or Carrie Jones' *Need* books, DO.

Q6 Are any of your novels based on personal experiences?

LOL! I wish. It'd be fun to be sucked into Ancient Greece or Ancient Egypt, I think. Except for all the running and screaming. But no. Once in awhile I'll pluck something from my life and stick it into a character, some little titbit that strikes my fancy. For example, my mother had claustrophobia, and the main character in my Library of Athena series suffers from a little bit of that too. It's fun to do that, make characters out of bits and pieces of people you know. I've become much more observant in the last few years, sort of storing up people that I've met away for future use. That's not always a compliment, by the way :).

Q7 Are you working on anything new at the moment or do you have anything planned?

I am ALWAYS working, it seems, though sometimes not as quickly as I'd like. I have several projects going. On the front burner is the next Library of Athena series book, which is really turning out to be stunning. I have a manuscript out looking for an agent an/or a publisher home, which is a Victorian Fairy-tale retelling with bits of Steampunk set in Philadelphia. I'm pretty in love with that story, so I'm going to keep at it until it sees print. And I've started scribbling some notes on a companion book to that one, another fairy tale retelling set in another part of the city of Philadelphia. That one promises to be much more Steampunky, with lots of timey-wimey-wibbly-wobbly bits tossed in (yes, I LOVE Doctor Who), and I'm dying to start really writing, once I've got some plot elements hammered out.

Q8 Do you ever do Library visits to Teen Reading Groups? If yes, what is the best way to get into contact with you or your agent about it?

I do, and I really love talking! I will also do Video chat visits (I have Skype), and will reply to letters, if I'm too far away from you. You can contact me through my website:

www.christine-norris.com