



Welcome to the June edition of Teen Librarian Monthly! This month we look back at two recent events and then move forward with a new product from the Google Labs and a competition that launches today.

At the beginning of the month I attended the Lighting the Future YLG, SLG and SLA conference, the opening article is a write-up of what occurred, if you are a regular reader of the Teen Librarian blog you will already have read it but if not it is below. Following on from that is my report of my first CILIP Carnegie & Kate Greenaway Awards ceremony – the one where history was made, for the first time the same book (*A Monster Calls*) won both the Carnegie & Kate Greenaway medals.

Third up is a quick look at a new service being offered by Google – the World Wonders Project, utilising street view and other Google services you are able to visit many famous sites of interest around the world, this will be good for students, researchers and armchair explorers.

Dear Writer is a project being run by author Siobhan Curham to offer young people writing tips, competition opportunities and advice. Then I offer up another of my tips on working with young people in Libraries.

Start the Story is a bi-monthly digital magazine from award-winning children's authors, Barry Hutchison and Tommy Donbavand. This is aimed at assisting teachers, parents & librarians in combating low literacy levels in the UK.

Finally the interview this month is a departure from the normal Eight Questions With... this month Teen Librarian chats with author Barry Hutchinson about his forthcoming independent publishing endeavour: *Dark & Sinister*.

Lighting the Future 8-11 June



I returned to my school from the Lighting the Future Youth Libraries Group (YLG), School Library Group (SLG) and School Libraries Association (SLA) joint conference yesterday with my head buzzing with ideas and inspiration.

From the opening address by Professor Stephen Heppell; a brilliant speaker and possibly one of the hardest working humans in education and outreach.

Don't believe me? Then take a look at his website: <http://heppell.net> – it will keep you busy for a while!

Also take a look here: <http://www.cloudlearn.net/> then read the report:

Don't just take a cursory glance at <http://www.cloudlearn.net> – take a serious read through you WILL learn something new. I can almost guarantee that!

One of the many other things he mentioned was Educurious.org and a free downloadable Hunger Games project: <http://educurious.org/try/hungergameschallenge.php>

The Reading and Technology panel was just as riveting, with Jonathan Douglas, Bev Humphrey and Dave Coplin
In brief:

ebooks good but tablets more immersive

Since 2005 10% drop in reading online. Reading in all formats dipping (Literacy Trust Survey)

Book trailers can help break genre boundaries – video can help attract non-readers to reading

Learning via youtube can be easier than via books

A skill we all need: ability to read a wikipedia article critically not word processing

The day was capped off with a networking session and dinner with poetry and stories with Liz Weir, John Agard, Tony Mitton and Atinuke

Saturday brought with it, Reading in the Political Spotlight – Question time panel with Nic Amy, Aidan Chambers, Annie Mauger, Simon Mayo, Miranda McKearney and David Reedy with all participants being very vocal in their views

- Aidan Chambers – *librarians can teach more than teachers. Do not confuse the profession with the act of teaching*
- David Reedy *what is needed to support schools is a fully funded & resourced schools library service'*
- Annie Mauger *librarians do need to get less nice we need to become more assertive'*

Saturday evening's dinner was brought to a close by Morris Gleitzman who spoke about his new book *Again* and how he was influenced to become a writer and a reader.

Sunday featured AGMs for the hard-core YLG, SLG & SLA members, followed by Access and Opportunities through Libraries – a panel discussion with Tony Durcan (Newcastle City Council), Helen Boothroyd (Suffolk County Council), this brought with it highly politicized twitter discussions between a number of librarians unhappy with the SCL stance on what has been happening in the library world of late.

The conference ended as it had begun with a fantastic address, this time by incoming SLA president, the author Kevin Crossley-Holland in which he dedicated himself to the service of the SLA and school librarians within the UK.

Other highlights of the conference included the reliably entertaining Maggie Stiefvater, fresh from her attendance at BEA in New York on the Saturday and Angie Sage who spoke on the Sunday about her path to becoming an author and her *Septimus Heap* novels. The publishers in attendance were also fantastic offering proof copies of current and forthcoming YA and childrens' books.

For me the best part of the conference was meeting up with friends old and new and speaking to fellow travellers who have the same goals and aims that I have at serving the young readers who use our libraries and trying to convert those that do not use libraries into readers and participants in our service.

My friend & colleague [Caroline](#) has a brilliant write-up of the conference here: <http://cazapr1.blogspot.co.uk/2012/06/lighting-future.html>

Ian Clark also has an excellent view of the conference here: <http://infoism.co.uk/blog/2012/06/lighting-the-future-a-personal-perspective/>



The CILIP Carnegie
& Kate Greenaway
Children's Book
Awards

History was made at the 2012 CILIP Carnegie & Kate Greenaway Awards! For the first time in over 20 years the same author has won the Carnegie award for the second consecutive year (Patrick Ness) and for the first time in the history of the awards the same book has won both the Carnegie and the Kate Greenaway Awards.

The best part of the ceremony (for me anyway) was that I was there! It is the first time I have attended a CKG Awards ceremony and it was fantastic! I was in a massive room at the Barbican surrounded by fellow librarians, publicists, publishers,

authors and several shadowing groups and there was an amazing buzz in the air. I was chatting to Karen Robinson – CKG judge & soon to be chair of the judging panel and mentioned that I had seen that e-mail notifications of the winners had gone out, she was dismayed and said she hoped I had not read the e-mails (I hadn't) and that I would be happy with the choices.

Rachel Levy, current judging chair gave an impassioned speech on libraries and books giving hope followed by a speech by Phil Bradley CLIP president about reading as a child and being introduced to the Carnegie short-list.

the videos of the judges speaking about the books on the short-lists were fantastic and the acceptance speeches by Jim Kay and Patrick Ness were impassioned and from the heart.

Patrick's speech was slightly more circumspect than his [2011 speech](#) but he was particularly scathing about volunteer run libraries, Ed Vaizey (how would he feel about having his appendix removed by a volunteer surgeon? It would save money by not having to pay his salary after– that got a laugh) and Michael Gove.

What shone through in Jim & Patrick's speeches was a love of reading, libraries and a positive view of young people. I felt like standing and applauding when Patrick made his views on how young people are treated known, how the negative is magnified and the positive things they do is marginalised and ignored. We need more high-profile public figures to be more outspoken about all the good things that are accomplished by the young people of today.

Hell I am going to be more outspoken, I work with teens out of choice and am going to start celebrating their accomplishments!

The awards were well-chosen and Patrick, Jim and Siobhan are all deserving of them, it was said that this was one of the strongest short-lists in years and it must have been a difficult decision to make, but it was the right decision!

World Wonders Project

From the archaeological areas of Pompeii to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial, Google's World Wonders Project aims to bring to life the wonders of the modern and ancient world.

The Google World Wonders Project is a platform which brings world heritage sites of the modern and ancient world online.

Using Street View, 3D modeling and other Google technologies, these amazing sites have been made accessible to everyone across the globe.

<http://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/worldwonders/>

Educational help packs can be downloaded to aid in classroom lessons here:

<http://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/worldwonders/education/>

Dear Writer

In 2010, author Siobhan Curham self-published *Dear Dylan*, her debut novel for young adults, following four books for adults. *Dear Dylan* tells the tale of a 14-year-old girl who starts emailing her favourite actor. The novel charts the resulting online friendship, and follows the heroine as she refuses to give up on her dream, despite the difficulties she faces at home. It went on to win the Young Minds Book Award and, after going to auction, was re-published by Egmont in April 2012.

Since the book was published Siobhan has been inundated by emails from readers who, inspired by the confidential nature and themes of the book, have opened up to her about their own dreams and fears. Inspired by this, and drawing upon her experience as a writer and a life coach, Siobhan has set up a weekly blog called *Dear Writer*. Through *Dear Writer*, Siobhan will offer young people writing tips, competition opportunities and advice, and she'll also show how writing can help with the issues that her readers have been emailing her about and that are all too common during the school years. Issues such as friendship, confidence, bullying, exam stress and, of course, first love.

Dear Writer is being launched on 25th June 2012 with an exciting fiction competition and the chance to win signed copies of *Dear Dylan*, and a first prize of Siobhan becoming your creative writing mentor (giving feedback on your work) for a month. To subscribe for free please go to: www.dearwriterblog.blogspot.com

Siobhan will also be offering a programme of workshops and talks about writing, details of which can be found on the Workshops page of the blog.

Tips on Working with Teens: Do NOT Touch the Librarian

This one is known as Mr Imrie's first rule, and I put it in place for two reasons – firstly I am over 6 feet tall and fairly bulky, the last thing I want is to have someone scream *"Oh my God! That monster what is he doing to the children?"* I have had that particular phobia ever since the incident where I picked up my cousin's daughter in Curry's to prevent her from toppling an expensive television and she screamed the place down, fortunately I was able to find my cousin and give her back before anything happened which in my mind was being picked up by the police for attempted abduction and deported.

and;

It is the one boundary rule from which all others are established. As long as they follow the rule it shows they are actively thinking about engaging with you, it also build an almost subconscious level of respect. Eventually it becomes almost second nature and while they may recognize you as part of the library group they are also aware that you are apart from the group. In one of my previous libraries one of the teens introduced her friends to me by saying "This is Mr Imrie the Librarian, do not touch the Librarian, no-one is allowed to touch the Librarian!"

Anyway, back to the tip. One of the things I have learned about teens is when they are in a group they can get very huggy – and they can be indiscriminate in their hugs. [Glomping](#) has been known to occur.

I have only been hugged twice since starting working in the UK, the first was when one of my teens left the group to go to university, she hugged everybody and ambushed me and ignored my cries of "No touchy the librarian!" It was a bit embarrassing as I had some colleagues visiting the group from another local authority and I had been telling them about how I had been running the group. The second was after a group meeting and I was waiting at the bus stop and some of the kids were waiting nearby and started chatting to me about where they were going on their holidays when their bus arrived one of them hugged me to say goodbye then almost missed her bus as

she started apologising for the hug and was worried about me getting into trouble at the library.

A friend of mine set up his rule by establishing his personal bubble space through mime and then saying "This is my bubble you are not allowed through it!"



Start the Story is a bi-monthly digital magazine from award-winning children's authors, Barry Hutchison and Tommy Donbavand.

Every issue is packed with information for primary school teachers and parents, as well as activities and exercises designed to get children excited about reading and writing.

With literacy levels in children across the UK at an all-time low it's vital that something is done to combat this. That's why we've put the magazine together – because we know the difference a love of reading and writing can make to a child's life.

Issue one of the magazine, and the accompanying pupil workbook, is available from 9am on Friday 29th June. To download it you will have to register a free membership account. This only takes a few seconds, and no payment details will be requested.

A yearly subscription to the magazine costs just £36. For that you will get six issues packed with advice, as well as a five page pupil workbook free with every edition.

<http://www.startthestory.co.uk>

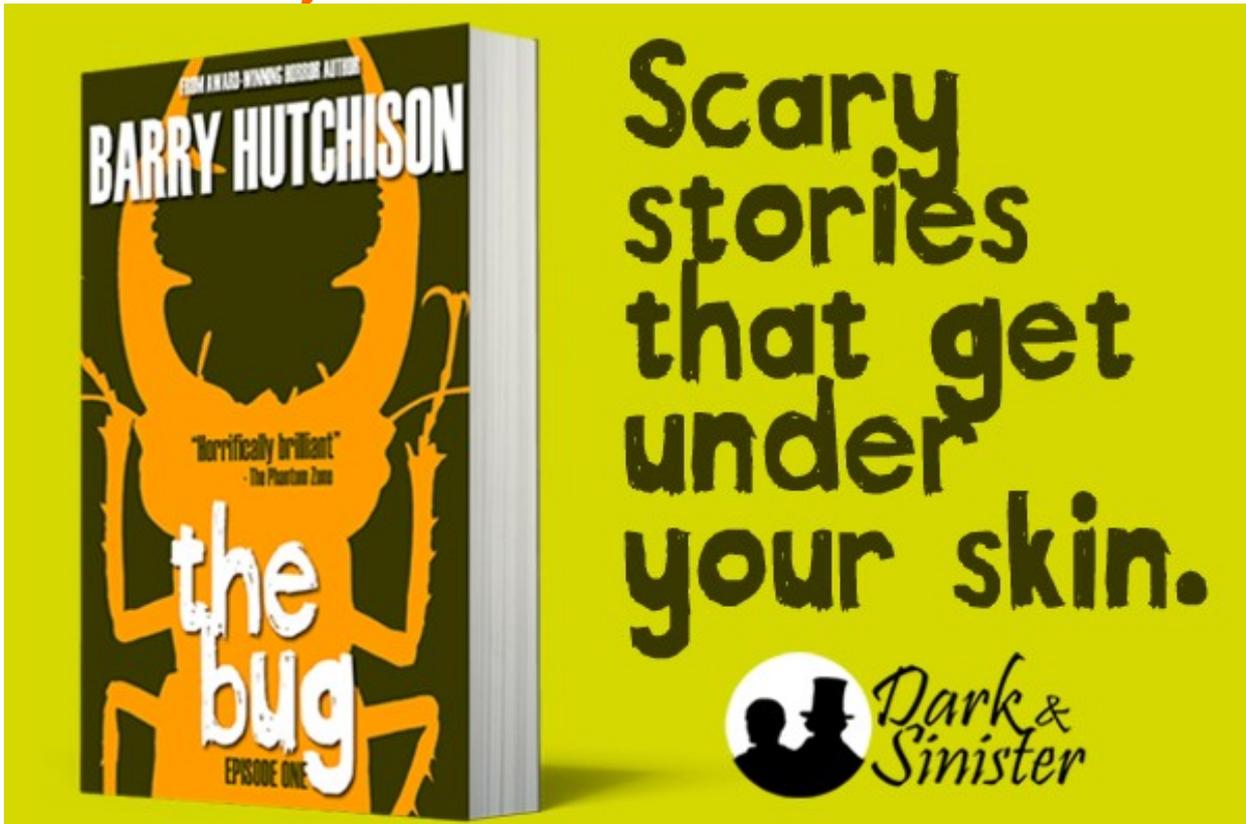
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Barry Hutchinson: The Dark & Sinister Interview



Hi Barry, I hear you have launched an independent publishing company named Dark & Sinister – would you care to tell us a bit more about it?

Dark & Sinister is a new type of publishing company specialising in digital horror. We're looking at finding new ways of taking advantage of digital technology to bring our readers into the worlds of our stories. So rather than bring out a 60,000 ebook and wait to see if it sells, we'll be bringing out ongoing weekly installments of 8,000 – 10,000 words each, backed up by web content, audio, video and even apps.

To give you one example of what I mean by that, let's say you're reading an episode of our first series – THE BUG – and are interested in a minor character who appears for a few paragraphs. You'll be able to go online and follow that character's story leading up to the point they appear in the main story, and then follow them afterwards, too. So you'll be able to see scenes from a different perspective, and learn things about the main ongoing story you may not have picked up on otherwise.

As I say, that's just one example. Many of the ideas we have for how else to enhance the stories are quite "out there", and need

to be refined a bit before we unleash them on the world. We have big plans, though, and digital provides the opportunity to put those plans into action.

I see that you are going down the crowd-sourced funding route via Indiegogo – for those that are not aware of crowd-funding would you be able to explain how it all works?

Essentially creators or whoever post up an idea they want to develop and need to raise finance for. In that past they'd take that idea to a bank manager or whoever, but thanks to the internet anyone in the world can contribute funds and help make projects happen. In return, the creator usually offers a range of perks which contributors get in return for putting in some cash. Our perks include a severed foot, a manuscript critique, and a kiss on the lips. Oh and badges. Lots and lots of badges.

Why did you make the decision to go the indie route?

I love print books, and I love the work publishers do. Print books are pretty much my favourite things in the world, and my house is filled to bursting with them. That said, there are certain things that digital is

better suited for, and I think the major publishers have their hands tied at the moment with regards how much they can take advantage of that. They produce print books first and foremost, with the ebook edition playing an increasingly large part.

So a large publisher has to put out electronic versions of their print books, and there are certain lengths and formats print books tend to have to stick to. By skipping out the print book stuff, we're suddenly not bound to stick to those templates. THE BUG, for example, is following the comic book publishing model with six "episodes" or "issues" and then a collected edition at the end of that run. It's not just a case of serialising a single story, either. These episodes are written almost like episodes of a big budget TV show like LOST or 24. There's a hook at the start, and a cliffhanger at the end, with each six episode series tying some of the strands of the story arc, but leaving others to run on to series two.

And so... er... in answer to your question, the indie route allows much more flexibility and gives us the freedom to experiment in a way that larger publishers often can't.

Will you still be writing for other publishers or will you stay with the creator-owned publishing model?

I still have a number of books to be published by HarperCollins, and I have no plans to stop writing for other publishers as long as they'll continue to publish me! As I say, I think what Dark & Sinister is aiming to do is quite a different thing to what print publishers are doing, so it's the equivalent of a newspaper journalist who also runs a news blog – there's some crossover, of course, but they're two disparate things for potentially very different markets. The stuff I'm personally writing for Dark & Sinister is for adult readers, too, whereas I'm very happy continuing to write for children and teens with my other publishers.

How will the money raised via Indiegogo be used?

The money will be used in a number of ways. Firstly, I want to build a solid website with which to run the whole venture from. So this would act as the central hub for the books, their spin-off sites, the community

stuff we have planned, etc, etc. That, as I've discovered, doesn't come cheap.

Because quality control is so important in indie publishing, some of the money will go towards professional services like editing, proof-reading, cover design, etc. For the audio stuff we'll also need to pay voice talent and recording expenses, then there are fees for the writers who will be developing stories with us, marketing costs, the cost of the perks themselves, etc, etc. We're also looking into doing the occasional one-off print version of some of our titles, with a run of around 100 copies, so some of the money may go towards that, too. I'm trying to raise \$10,000 (Indiegogo is a US-based site and works in dollars) but with all the costs involved we'll have to monitor every penny of that.

What can we expect from Dark & Sinister?

A finely-balanced combination of high-tech innovation, and good old fashioned scares. To me, horror is the most interactive of all the genres, sucking you in like Al Pacino in the Godfather III. It's the perfect genre for a lot of the things we're trying to do. Plus horror fans are some of the most hardcore passionate fans in the world!

How can readers, fans and librarians get involved?

The obvious answer is by donating money at <http://www.indiegogo.com/darkandsinister> but obviously in these times of austerity not everyone has cash to spare. You can help by going along to that page and using the buttons to share it on Twitter, Facebook or to your friends on email. Spreading the word, talking about the project, reading the free previews I'm posting and discussing them with other people – all these things help raise awareness of the campaign, and of what we're trying to do. There's a newsletter on our website – www.darkandsinister.com. Just signing up to that is another way of helping, so there's lots you can do without it costing you a penny.

Although, that said, you can donate as little as \$2 (about £1.40) and get my eternal thanks and a potential kiss on the lips in return...